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WILLIAM AND MARY.

A TALE OF

THE SIEGE OF LOUISBURG,

1745.

By DAVID HICKEY,
Minister of the Methodist Church.

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September 11, 1923 E.M.

PREFACE.

AMONG the few historical localities in Canada, none is of greater interest than that of Louisburg, Cape Breton. Although the once redoubtable fortress has disappeared—little remaining to mark the spot save some heaps of rubbish and mounds of earth—the place has still a strange charm for all who have been so fortunate as to stand amidst its ruins.

It was long a matter of surprise to me, why the story of the remarkable siege of 1745 had never been presented to the public in popular form. The present work is an attempt to do this; and however imperfectly it has been done, it has from the beginning been a labor of love. While the historical portion of the narrative is strictly accurate, so far at least as the authorities consulted are accurate, the usual liberties permitted to writers of fiction have been taken advantage of.

Of course the customary sneer towards the religious novel is expected, yet I do not know whether "William and Mary" is entitled to the distinction. It is, however, strictly moral. That terrible sentence which, in the opinion of a certain class of critics, is deemed sufficient to consign all such books to the tomb of

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the Capulets, will, no doubt, be forthcoming—"He preaches!" To which it is here replied by way of anticipation, "Yes, he preaches!" The author is a preacher. He has aimed to preach in this book. If he has failed in preaching, the book is a failure. Then let it fail! He will have the consolation of knowing that he is not the only preacher whose sermons have been failures. If, however, in the estimation of the critics "he preaches," no matter whether the sermons preached are good, bad, or indifferent in their estimation, then he has succeeded in what he attempted to do, viz., to preach.

DAVID HICKEY.

PARRSBORO', CUMBERLAND CO.,
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WILLIAM AND MARY.

CHAPTER I.

A NEW ENGLAND SABBATH, 1735.

THE day was oppressively hot. Scarcely a breath of air. The leaves of the trees hung languidly, as if shrivelled out of their vitality. The sky was destitute of a cloud, save over yonder against the hills which bounded the horizon a huge bank of vapor clung gloomily enough as if bent on mischief. A silence as of death reigned on every side. An occasional splash in the stream smote the ear, when some wanton trout, ignoring the day, made a profane leap at the luckless insects that clustered for the coolness of the bank. For it was the Sabbath—a New England Sabbath—a Sabbath in New Hampshire in the latter part of July, 1735. A Sabbath afternoon among pleasant fields, green glades, and purling brooks.

Everything said it was the Sabbath. The well-kept kine, with sleek and shining coat, reposed with blinking eyes under the trees, chewing the cud with decorous solemnity as became the sanctity of the day. The great, good-natured dog near the door-step, with head between his paws, opened lazily one eye and then the other to

gaze askance towards the house as if to call attention to his good behavior. As the fiery, brazen sun swung round upon him, he rose and tripped noiselessly under the shadow with lolling tongue, throwing meanwhile ludicrous glances of self-depreciation at the windows, as much as to say: "I can't help it—it's so hot, I must move--please don't be angry!" No bird twittered in the shrubbery. The very bees had become ashamed of themselves for making a noise on the Sabbath—their booming music was stilled. Everything was as quiet as the grave, and composed, as became the Sabbath—a New England Sabbath in the latter part of July, 1735.

There had been divine worship in the meeting-house down at the cross roads in the fore part of the day; and if the rustic villagers had during the week permitted their daily toils to deaden in any way their reverence for the Sabbath, they must have felt pretty thoroughly ashamed of themselves that morning as they sat under the thunders of the law. The venerable man of God who had gone in and out among them now nigh unto two score years, delivered his soul with patriarchal tenderness, but unmistakable firmness, on the awful sin of allowing worldly cares to blind them to the solemnity of the day of the Lord. Hence it was that a more than usual silence brooded this afternoon over the peaceful valley among the New Hampshire hills.

The strong, stern-faced man sitting here by the open window, bolt upright in his hard, straight-backed chair (he would have thought it a sin which hath no forgiveness had there been on the Sabbath an inclination of a hairbreadth in the back), Bible in hand, had for these hours been reading over and over the morning's text, turning to the references which he had carefully marked in the church, while making an occasional excursion to

the lessons which the minister had read. Seated near him, and apparently similarly engaged, was a fair, comely woman, the love-light in whose eyes shone with subdued tenderness (out of deference to the Sabbath) as ever and anon she glanced from the book on her knee down at the curly head nestling in the folds of her dress. A lovely boy! Ten summers had come and gone since she had clasped him first in her arms with the new-found joy of a mother. Who will blame her if more than once she wandered away from the text and its ponderous divisions, to bestow a beaming smile on the upturned face as the little head grew restless, and roguish fingers tugged at her apron-strings? Who will blame her, if all thoughts of the awfulness of the day vanished from her mind as once she caught sight of the well-thumbed Catechism, wrong side up, on his knee? Who will blame her if she was saved from the atrocious sin of profane laughter only by plunging more deeply than ever into the terrible denunciations hurled against the Jews for Sabbath desecration, and which that morning had been read in sonorous tones by the minister? She loved the boy—God bless her—nor could she bring her strong common sense and affectionate heart to believe that her darling would be very much of a sinner were he out with Carlo under the shadow, with the Catechism safe on the shelf. He had been seated there for hours, puzzling his young head with questions she had never understood herself, and never hoped to understand. And he but a child, and the day so hot! And she would turn again from the stoning of the wicked wretch who had gathered sticks on the holy day, to fondle the curly head, and draw it closer to her knee.

William Farley, the strong man in the straight-backed chair had, when scarcely out of his teens, wooed and wed

this the fairest of the many fair daughters of the little hamlet of Woodside, where he himself had been born and bred. He had never in all his life been far from the limits of the peaceful valley where his parents had lived before him, and where they had died in peace. Their son had but one ambition, and only one, when, to the chagrin of many an honest swain, he carried in triumph to the old home out on the hill the sweetest girl in all the country-side. That ambition was to live worthy of her who had confided into his keeping all the wealth of her loving, ardent heart. He knew of only one way to do this—to walk reverently in the footsteps of his father, who had feared the Lord all his days and lived in constant dread of the judgment. His mother had died when he was but a child—he never remembered the soft touch of her lips upon his cheek. To cultivate the old homestead as he had seen his father do it before him, to go "to meeting" with his blushing bride, and believe "the doctrines," summed up the articles of his creed and the sole object of his life. Nor had he swerved either to the right hand or to the left as the years rolled on, and we find him sitting here this Sabbath afternoon, Bible in hand, no longer a simple member of the Church, but Deacon Farley of Woodside, the most respected of the many worthy men who of a Sabbath morning sat bolt upright in straight-backed pews in the Meeting-house down by the cross-roads. It was noticed by some, and felt most keenly by one, that ever since he had been made a deacon, he had developed an austerity of manner in striking contrast to his former manly, outspoken character. There had been born to the worthy couple this only child, whom they had named William after the father, and Fenwick out of respect to their aged pastor, the Rev. John Fenwick. Mr. Fenwick had joined them

together in holy wedlock ; and when the little fellow was baptized, what name should be honored by the happy man if not the name of one he loved with a devotion second only to that which he bore his comely wife? Ten years had come and gone since the never-to-be-forgotten Sabbath morning when the young parents stood up before the hushed congregation to dedicate their first-born unto God. He had been their first-born until now, and the dimpled infant had grown and flourished without a rival into this roguishly handsome lad at his mother's feet, with upturned Catechism on his knee.

Not a word had been spoken for hours. The heat was becoming unbearable to the restless boy and scarcely less so to the patient woman. The solemn rustle of the leaves of the Bible from the straight-backed chair broke at intervals the oppressive silence, and then the hush of the grave was again upon them. Mrs. Farley moved nervously, as with appealing eyes she at length closed her book and glanced towards the chair. But the chair gave no sign. The strong lines on the face spoke only of the stoning of the man who had been put "in ward" for gathering sticks on the Sabbath-day. A faint whispering sound outside—so low—was it real or a phantom of the brain evolved by the sweltering heat? Carlo rose and shook himself, and then, as if remembering what day it was and the awful thing he had done, stole away in among the shrubbery of the garden with his tail trailing the ground. And now a far-off rumble-grumble unmistakable ! The chair moves. The boy springs to his feet :

"Oh, father !"

"Take your place instantly, boy ; it is the holy—"

The voice was drowned by the hoarse, muttering growl which rumbled down over the valley from the hills. Carlo

set up a howl of desperation from his hiding-place, as if he would say: "Sabbath, or no Sabbath, this is more than any decent dog can stand!" The deacon laid down his Bible solemnly and stepped to the door. The great cloud that all the afternoon had hugged the horizon was swollen to gigantic proportions as it went surging fast up towards the sun. Mountains of fleecy vapor bathed in dazzling light were piling themselves high one upon the other—forging ahead as if urged on by an intelligent will—dashing against their fellows, now merging together, and then stepping forth with defiant front as if conscious of united power. How grandly terrible they looked, their sombre base contrasting vividly with their golden-crested peaks. A gust of wind swept down to the door of the farmhouse, dallied with the deacon's hair, toyed with the leaves in the garden, then off away across the fields towards the village with a moan. The birds fluttered from their hiding-place as, with ruffled wing, they flew confusedly through the air. And now the giant cloud has rolled over the sun. A blinding flash, and then—a roar as if heaven and earth had crashed together. The wind, rallying its forces on the hill-top, comes down with the shriek of charging squadrons. The trees writhe and twist, and twirl and reel. Then away to the right and left flank to give room for the artillery of God. The deacon closed the door and window deliberately. Not even the warring elements without could make him forget it was the Sabbath. He seated himself again in the straight-backed chair, musing on the quaking of Sinai—its thunderings and lightnings strangely mixed up in his mind with the thrusting through of man or beast that might touch the Mount. An ominous silence. And now, first one, then a dozen, then silence again—now a cataract. Then the windows of heaven seemed opened

upon them as the swelling torrents poured down upon the roof. Mrs. Farley grasped her boy and clasped him in her arms with fear. The deacon's mind was hovering between Sinai and the breaking up of "the fountains of the great deep," when he was aroused by the startled exclamation of his wife:

"What's that?"

Hurrying footsteps were plainly heard approaching the house through the plunging sweep of the torrent. The next instant the door was flung open and a dripping figure stood in bewilderment before the astounded family.

CHAPTER II.

DEAD AND GONE

THE astonished deacon had risen to his feet almost simultaneously with the opening of the door. Had a thunderbolt from the clouds rolled in upon him and lain visibly before his eyes he could scarcely have been more amazed. It was not that any human being should have been out in such a tempest that astonished him. That did not enter into his calculations for a moment. But that any man would dare desecrate the holy day by entering *his* house—Deacon Farley's house—deprived him of the power of speech, and for the nonce transformed him into a moral iceberg. Had it been even some reckles son of Belial (for, sooth to say, even Woodside could boast of such) it would have been bad enough. But that the intruder and desecrater should be no less a

personage than his nearest friend and neighbour Abijah Oliver, was past the bounds of belief and possibility. Possibility? Yes, it was possible enough—too true, for there in dripping garments stood the veritable Abijah—a real, tangible, corporeal existence, and no genius of the storm. It would be difficult to say who felt the more embarrassed, the intruder or the intruded upon. Certainly, poor Abijah, as he stood in the middle of the floor in a pool of water which trickled from his drenched garments, presented, at least, the one most worthy of immediate consideration. The quick-witted woman was the first to see this, for with the unerring intuition of her sex she took in the situation at a glance, though too bewildered by his sudden appearance to immediately act upon it. Now, coming to herself, and offering the woe-begone visitant a chair, she excitedly exclaimed :—

"What's th' matter, Abijah—what's th' matter?"

Matter? Why, that was another view of it altogether to the deacon. Matter? Sure enough, something might be the matter. Why, even the Jews were permitted to rescue the unfortunate ox on the Sabbath, and if anything was the matter at Abijah's, duty was clear. The stern look faded from Farley's face in an instant, as, recalled by his wife's words from the stoning of the man "that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath-day," he instantly added with genuine concern :—

"Abijah, is anything wrong? Speak, man, quick—out with it at once!"

Aroused by the deacon's voice he managed to tell them that his wife had been taken alarmingly ill since meeting, and then he was off again into the storm. No more thoughts of desecration. It was but the work of a moment. The deacon had grasped his coat, and though the rain still plunged in sweeping, swirling torrents, he

was dashing after his friend through the driving tempest.

"William, we must go tew. 'Taint no use to stay here neow, tho' 'tis th' Sabbath. Doan't know what'll turn up. 'Twon't be nataral, an' th' poor woman p'raps a dyin'!"

Hurriedly grasping her shawl, she grabbed at the same time a bunch of never-failing "yarbs" from over the mantelpiece, exclaiming as she did so:—

"Whar's yer hat—quick—th' poor woman a-dyin', an' th' children. What'll become o' 'em considerin' th' father? Come!"

William was wild with delight. It is a shame to have to say it, but for the moment he thought less of the sick neighbor than he did of his unlooked-for deliverance from the Catechism. Not that he was hard-hearted, the generous boy! A loving nature was his, but at this particular juncture he would have made no objections if half the women in the neighborhood had "took a turn," if thereby deliverance had come from his dreaded Sunday task.

Carlo, who had been doing penance for his outrageous behavior at the commencement of the storm by sheepishly hiding under the currant-bushes, bounded forth with a bark of mingled joy and surprise as the mother and son emerged from the house. He acted as if certain of assured absolution for his own questionable behavior when he saw such extraordinary performances on the holy day by his superiors. How he barked, and whisked, and scampered through the blinding rain, now throwing himself on his back with sheer wantonness in the pools of water that flooded the pathway—now up like a flash to snap defiance at the sky as a more than usually terrific thunderclap shook the ground—then away off through

the dripping grass as if his life depended upon overtaking some imaginary foe—and now back in sweeping circles round his friends, bringing his erratic exploits to a grand *finale* as he closed upon them, jumping upon his young master to thrust his big wet nose fair into the laughing face. William was scarcely less excited than Carlo, but deference for his mother kept him within reasonable bounds of propriety as he staggered along by her side. The distance between the two houses was inconsiderable, but Mrs. Farley thought she never should reach it, but at last, wet to the skin and out of breath, they stumbled in at the open door where the deacon, having seen their approach, stood waiting to receive them.

"She's sick unto death, I fear," he whispered to his wife; "I must off for the minister!"

Hastily divesting herself of her dripping shawl, Mrs. Farley passed immediately to the sufferer's room, leaving William with the two children—Harry, a brave lad of eight, and the little Mary, two years his junior. William was thoroughly drenched, and was soon sitting with his feet up on the rung of his chair to keep them out of a veritable pool of water that flowed in continually from his saturated garments. Harry was equal to the occasion, and soon led his young friend to the attic, where, in an incredibly short space of time, they descended in triumph, though with suppressed titters, fearful to think of considering the day, not to mention the poor sick mother's groans issuing from her bedroom. William, to do him justice, tried hard to be grave as he appeared arrayed in a dry suit of clothes, which gave him all he could do to sit down, and, when down, all he could do to get up. Soon, on tiptoe, the three stole away out into the back kitchen, where Harry presently had a blazing fire on the hearth, while Mary stood shyly eying their

visitor with an irresistibly comic expression on her lovely face. William caught sight of her, and, again ignoring the day, dived after the little thing as she retreated into an interminable recess behind the huge fireplace. Then, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he came back demurely to his chair, while a little head appeared emerging from the gloom and two bright eyes shone and sparkled like diamonds in the darkness. The rain still fell in mighty torrents, but the thunder-cloud had rolled far off, sending ever and anon a parting salute, which rumbled away in sullen whispers over the hills. A sudden silence fell upon the children, and William, as if now thoroughly ashamed of himself for his levity, and remembering that he was the eldest of the group, after some minutes remarked:

"Is your mother very bad, Hal?"

The boy's countenance fell in an instant, and the great tears stood in his eyes as he sobbed in reply:

"Oh, how wicked I've been, an' poor mother—;" but he broke down as the words stuck in his throat. Little Mary came out of her hiding-place, and, getting down on her knees beside the brother, threw her arms around his neck, sobbing as if her heart would break. Then William cried with them, and for some minutes nothing was heard but the low sound of the weeping children as it mingled with the pattering splash of the falling rain against the window-panes. William was again the first to speak. Stooping down, he disengaged the tight-clasped arms from Harry's neck and lifted the little one to his knee. She did not run away this time, but nestled her head on his breast, while her heart fluttered like a frightened bird. Thus they sat in silence in the gloaming sobbing together, William now and then whispering a word of comfort in Mary's ear. The sun had gone down

and the storm had banished the twilight. It was quite dark, when Carlo's well-known bark was heard at the door, followed quickly by the hurried footsteps of the deacon and minister. Then the children were ordered into the sick-room. The great Bible was taken down from its shelf. The sonorous periods of the 103rd Psalm rolled out on the awe-struck group. A feeling of dread—an indescribable sense of approaching calamity—what they knew not—filled every heart. The rain dashed against the house as if in mockery—now holding itself up for a moment in awful suspense, and then plunging down with the rush and sweep of a cataract, completely drowning the reader's voice. The far-off flash of lightning ever and anon gleamed luridly on the windows, paling the dull light of the yellow candle on the table to a weird and sickly glare. The psalm at length was finished and all rose reverently to their feet, as in tremulous tones the aged man poured forth his soul to Him who rides upon the storm, who maketh the clouds His chariot. The prayer ended. They approached the bed. Little Mary threw her arms round the mother's neck as she clambered in by her side. Poor Abijah fell upon his knees and grasped the clammy hand of his wife in both his own. The boys, with tears streaming down their faces, stood in a corner by themselves. The others were near the door. It had ceased raining. An unearthly stillness, and then—she was not, for God had taken her.

CHAPTER III.

BREAKING THE COMMANDMENTS AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

SEVERAL months had rolled by since the events recorded in the last chapter. Abijah was inconsolable. All that his brethren of the Church could do, backed by the earnest expostulations of the minister, failed to arouse him from the almost lethargic stupor into which he had fallen on the death of his wife. Somehow or other he had got it into his head that she would not have died if she had remained at home that terribly hot Sabbath morning. She had not been feeling well for weeks. Hard work, with considerable worry, had told on her never robust constitution. Her husband was by nature shiftless, and the weight of the family cares, as a consequence, fell on her. He was, however, kind and tender-hearted. He had pleaded with her that morning not to go to meeting, but she could not think of committing so grievous a sin. Then Abijah would dwell on the fact that the exercises that day had been longer than usual, and so it got into his muddled brain that the Church—ay, even the minister—was not altogether clear from blame in the matter of his irreparable loss. It worked upon him till he grew moody and taciturn towards his neighbors, who, as in duty bound, shook the head and tapped the forehead over the sad lapse of one who hitherto had walked without reproach. Not that Abijah absented himself from the sanctuary. He would as soon have thought of joining the wild Indians of the forest as being counted among the few in Woodside who, on one excuse or another, absented themselves from the Meet-

ing-house. But his whole nature appeared to be so embittered as to transform him into another man. Yet he loved the two motherless children as he had never done when she was living. His love for the lost one centred itself now upon them, and Mary especially henceforth became the idol of his desolate heart. His affection for the child had in it something wild and terrible in its intensity. He lived for her alone. He could not bear her out of his sight, and turned almost savagely upon the kindly offer of Mrs. Farley, when, some time after the funeral, she one day went over to see him, and ventured to hint about taking the little one home with herself.

"Hum with yer! What'll yew take 'er hum with yer fur I'd like ter kno'?" And he glared at the woman as if she was a wild beast from the woods ready to pounce on his child. "No," he continued, "not ef I kno' it. I've lost 'nuff, han't I? Listen ter me, I've suthin' t' say t' ye!"

Poor Mrs. Farley, amazed and taken very much aback, nodded for him to go on, measuring at the same time with her eye the distance from where she was seated to the door in case he should spring upon her.

"See a' here, I've had 'nuff o' this. I've heerd all I wants t' heer abeout predestinatin' things an' sech. It doan't ceount nuthin'. Ef the're 'pinted t' die, they'll die, an' ef not, not. That's doctrine, aint it? Jest so. Wal, 'cording t' doctrine, ef Mary's t' go, she'll go; ef not, not. That's doctrine, tew, aint it? Jest so. Wal, Mary's not 'pinted t' go, so 'taint no use talkin' abeout it!"

Mrs Farley was glad enough to get away so easily. So, after this sage deliverance, she hastily bade the widower good-day, and hurried home to relate her adventure to her husband. The deacon had deep thoughts on the subject, but kept his own counsel for the present.

Months had rolled by since Mrs. Farley's rebuff with reference to Mary; and the sharp autumn winds were beginning to howl down over the hills. There had been little change in Abijah except for the worse. He would not suffer Mary out of his sight for a minute if he could help it. Often he couldn't help it. He had to be away in the meadows attending to his work, and although he had always taken the two children with him since their mother died, now it was getting altogether too cold for his precious darling to be so long away from the house. He had compromised matters recently by remaining as near home as possible, but his work had suffered in consequence, so this sharp morning he must leave them. Picking up the little girl in his arms, he kissed her over and over again, and then, putting her down, made for the door. His hand was on the latch when he hesitated, looked back at the child as she stood gazing after him with her sweetly expressive eyes:

"God bless yew!" he exclaimed, picking her up again and folding his great awkward arms around her, "God bless me Mary!"

Then he put her down, and turning to Harry: "Doan't go from hum, doan't go a-pryin' eout on th' road, nor inter Farley's field: its cold for Mary. Thar, mind neow what I tell yer. I'll be deown t' th' medders till dinner time."

He stooped down and kissed the child again and was off. Left alone by themselves the children soon began to weary of the confinement. It didn't look nearly so cold as it did, Harry thought, and he made several sallies into the open air to test the temperature. The last time he came back greatly elated:

"Oh, Mary, the clouds are goin' an' the sun's real hot. Let's wrap up an' go eout!"

"What for?" queried the little one.

"Because!"

"Oh!"

"Tubbe sure!"

Harry had no intention of breaking his father's commandments, as he hastily proceeded to muffle his sister in a great shawl, and bustled about with the importance of one upon whom great responsibility rested. He would just take his sister out for a run in the field, and then back again; but just as to how the dear little mite of a thing was to run, sweltered up as she was in the great shawl, did not enter into his calculations. Soon the two emerged from the house—Mary a sight to be seen, nearly as broad as she was tall. She made the best of it, however, and waddled around bravely enough, tumbling over only once or twice, where she lay helplessly in her wraps till assisted to her feet by the ever-active Harry. He was as near crazy with delight at his experiment as it was safe for a boy to be. The cool, bracing air stimulated, if it did not intoxicate him. Suddenly he remembered a nice shaded nook where he was sure there were nuts, for he had seen them with his own eyes growing there a month or so ago. No sooner said than done. The two started off immediately, Mary toiling along as best she could, as Harry was so eager for the nuts that he rather ungallantly left her far in the rear.

All at once he recollected that the coveted spot was in Deacon Farley's field, and hadn't his father commanded him not to go into the deacon's field? Of course, he mustn't go! Just then the sister waddled along up the hill where he stood, crestfallen over this unexpected complication of affairs. She was very tired, out of breath, and just ready for a good cry. She sat down on a stone, the brother looking doggedly off in the direction of the

precious nuts, which he was sure he could see glistening in the sunshine. Well, there was nothing for it now, he supposed, but to go back, and he rather sullenly turned to Mary, who by this time was simply waiting for a favorable crisis to scream outright.

"I doan't think th' nuts—," but his voice was drowned by a whoop that came from somewhere out of the thicket in the deacon's field. The crisis had come, and Mary screamed lustily. Harry sprang to her side, but before he could say a word to calm her, the lithe form of William Farley, preceded by Carlo, came bounding towards them, while the air rang with his merry shouts.

"Ha! ha! ha! Out in the cold such a day as this. I saw you comin' an' hid. Where goin'?"

Harry explained.

"Come 'long, then. Nuts? Well, I should say so—oceans! Come 'long: here goes!" and diving towards Mary he caught her in his arms, and went tearing off down the other side of the hill, before Harry could utter a word. It was too late to expostulate now, he thought, so satisfying his conscience that he had to follow to look after his sister, he was soon scampering after them at a tremendous pace. Mary screamed a little at first, till she got used to it, as she was carried forward at headlong speed over the hill. Harry dashed past them, at last, shouting: "I can run faster'n you; come on!" and away the three went laughing and bellowing, with the delighted Carlo fairly beside himself with all that was going on.

"Here they be: hooroar!" cried Harry, as he sprang at a nut-laden branch above his head.

William placed his charge carefully on the grass in a sheltered spot, and soon had her lap filled with the brown-coated nuts, which she attacked bravely with her teeth.

Then the boys wandered off into the thicket, and were presently lost to view as they separated one from the other. Mary was too busy with her hard-shell dainties to notice her desertion at first, but she became conscious after a time that she was alone, and realizing that another favorable crisis had come, began crying aloud with a will. Then she paused to listen, but could hear nothing save Carlo's joyous bark far off in the thicket. Thoroughly alarmed, she struggled to her feet screaming and calling her brother at the top of her voice; but the wind blew fresh and strong from the direction her companions had taken, and so drowned her cries.

The two lads had meanwhile passed through the thicket into an open space beyond, and descrying what they believed to be a perfect paradise of nuts farther on, had scampered off for fresh conquests. Here they separated again, each penetrating deeper and deeper in among the thickly-grown underbrush. All at once Harry thought of the little Mary away off yonder alone, and, with a startled exclamation, made for the opening. William was busily filling his pockets, boy-like, thinking of nothing in the world but the work in hand, when he thought he heard a shout. Listening, he heard his own name called with frightened energy.

"Why, that's Hal; what's up? Hullo!"

Then another scream, and his name louder still.

"P'raps Mary's—" and he was tearing through the brush, scratching his face and rending his clothes, as he darted onward like a frightened deer. Emerging from the bush he bounded across the open space in a moment, standing face to face with Harry, who, holding his sister's shawl in his hands, was jumping up and down in a frenzy, as he screamed—

"Mary's gone—lost—Oh! oh! oh!"

William took in the situation at a glance, and decided on action.

"She's not far off, be sure. Hi, Carlo; ho, Carlo; Carlo-o-oh!" and the dog came bounding towards them, nose to the ground.

"Here, Carlo—here. She's not far off. Come this way, Hal—no, you go that way an' I'll go this. We'll find 'er. Ho, Mary—hul-lo-ah! Here, we're comin'!" and the air rang with her name. But no answer. Harry was bewildered. His father would soon be home, miss them, follow, find Mary lost! Oh, what should he do? What could he do? Not being able to answer these fearful questions, he began jumping up and down as before, bawling with all his might. Meanwhile William, breathless with excitement and thoroughly alarmed, as a fearful thought flashed upon him, rushed through the thicket for the brook. He hadn't thought of the brook!

"Hi, Carlo-ho-here!"

What if she had wandered near the brook nigh here where it was hidden by the brush? He had fallen in there himself many a time; but he was a boy. Fallen in, "p'raps drownded!" And he the cause of it! The perspiration stood in cold beads upon his forehead, as with set teeth he bounded after Carlo towards the stream. Ha! what's this? And he grasped in his headlong speed a bit of torn calico fluttering from a twig. Then a splash, a gurgling, and then a brave boy, bearing in his arms a dripping little body, went panting madly up the hill towards his home.

CHAPTER IV.

ABIJAH DELIVERS HIS SOUL.

DEACON FARLEY had come in from the fields to his dinner, and, not seeing the boy around, asked his wife where William had gone.

"Somewhar abeout," was the cheery reply. "Sh'dn't wonder if he'd run deown t' see th' childer, poor things!"

The deacon sat down. He was a man of few words unless aroused, grave, stern, if not austere in demeanor, but with a heart of gold all the same, if anyone knew how to get at it. He pitied the two motherless ones most sincerely, and took care to build no barriers that would prevent free intercourse between them and his son. If William could cheer them in their loneliness, they needed it all now, especially as the father was showing his true colors; for it was more and more fully taking possession of Farley's mind that Abijah was outside the covenant of grace.

Mrs. Farley was busily engaged in setting the table for their frugal meal, and with the clattering of dishes added to her usual bustling manner, there was too much noise for her to hear the startled exclamation of the husband as he rushed for the door. Before he reached it William had burst into the roon with his dripping burden in his arms.

"In heaven's name!" but the astounded couple saw it all—no need for words. The lovely face of the child was cold and clammy, the bright curls fell in loose matted clusters on her neck and shoulders. Farley opened not his mouth. In moments of supreme trial he was dumb. The wife, however, made up for his lack of service, as

she tore the wet garments from the little body, sobbing aloud—

"Dead—drownded! Oh my—what'll I dew. Dead, drownded. Sweet pet, I know'd it, I know'd it. I know'd suthin' was a-comin'. Dead, drownded. Oh! oh! oh!"

Then coming to herself, as she always did in any great crisis, she cried—

"William—quick, fetch th' bar'l—run, there's wan eout at th' door,—no, it's tew cold. Here, this wan'll dew! Lift her up, neow. Thar, neow!"

And at the last word the tiny form of the child was being pushed back and forth between the deacon and his wife, after the manner of a cross-cut saw.

"That'll dew—neow for th' blankets an' hot stuns," and in an instant Mary, swathed from head to foot, was laid before the great, roaring fire on the hearth, while again they rolled her from side to side, chafing the little limbs briskly with their hands. Their faces scorched by the flames, the worthy couple intent only on the object before them, heard not the approaching footsteps and agonizing groans outside the house. The door was dashed open, and Abijah, frantic with grief and rage, staggered into the kitchen, reeling like a drunken man.

"Whar's me child? Ha, dead—drownded! Away fends!—away divils!—give me m' child," and the frenzied father sprang towards the hearth.

"Stand back, Abijah, stand back," cried the deacon, menacingly, half-rising to his feet; "stand back, man!"

"She's openin' on 'em, sure's you live," screamed Mrs. Farley hysterically, at the same moment collapsing on the hearth in a swoon.

As the deacon sprang to the assistance of his wife, Abijah swooped down like an eagle and clutched the child

in his arms, dancing about the floor like one demented, showering kisses on the cold cheeks, while he poured forth volleys of abuse upon his enemies one and all, whom he firmly believed were in league with Satan to rob him of his idol. William, who had gone in search of Harry, here entered with the weeping boy, followed close by Carlo snuffing the air, as he looked up with his bright intelligent eyes at Abijah prancing madly around the room. The scene was a strange one. Mrs. Farley insensible on the hearth; her husband bending over her; Abijah pirouetting on the floor; the two lads mute and silent with tear-filled eyes; Carlo not quite clear, but it was his part of the programme to take hold of Abijah by the leg.

"She opened on 'em; sure's you live," was the first words whispered to her husband as Mrs. Farley regained consciousness. "She opened on 'em," then rousing herself she was instantly on her feet, exclaiming: "Give 'er t' me!"

Mary had opened them wide enough by this time, and was gazing in a dazed kind of a way into her father's face as he went round and round in his crazy dance, belching forth no very complimentary expressions regarding every one in general, and the Farleys in particular. The deacon, relieved from further anxiety about his wife, laid a hand on Abijah's shoulder, and with the grip of a vice twirled the man round till they faced each other.

"Stop this!"

Abijah stopped it, and Farley taking the child from him passed her over to his wife, who immediately commenced capering about on her own account almost as excitedly as Abijah himself. Mary closed her eyes wearily, and soon went off into a profound slumber as she was tucked tenderly away amidst interminable layers

of blankets in Mrs. Farley's own bed. Then, by the time the hot "stuns" were adjusted at the little one's feet, and a tremendous pot full of "yarbs" was put to steep among the coals, explanations began to be in order. William told his story, Harry his, Farley his, and Mrs. Farley hers. Before they were half through, Abijah was pretty thoroughly ashamed of himself.

"Ye see, mum," he began, addressing the deacon's wife; "ye see, mum, I git some queer idees inter m' head. Yew wanted tew hev Mary here. Wal, when I see what's goin' on ez I com' in, I wus afeared y'd got up this 'ere game to get Mary 'pinted, predestinated-like, tew com'. But, ez I wus a sayin' tew yew afore, Mary's not 'pinted t' com'!"

"Jest so," laconically responded the woman, with considerable irritation, as she raked the coals round the steaming pot of "yarbs."

"It appears to me Abijah," put in the deacon, "that you've acted the fool in this whole affair!" His language, owing to his long association with the minister, rarely degenerated into the vernacular of his wife and neighbors. "We have lived together long enough," he continued, "for you to know we're your best friends."

"That's true 'nough," replied the now crestfallen Abijah, "that's true 'nough, but I keep aturnin' an' aturnin' over in me mind all th' same!"

"What do you keep turning over in your mind anyway?" was Farley's sharp interrogation.

"Wal, it 'pears t' me, I aint ez steddy ez I was wanst afore th' wan's dead an' gone died. I aint ez steddy in th' faith 'beout 'lection an' 'pintin' an' sech!"

"Oho!" thought the deacon to himself, "it's coming, is it?"

But he said nothing. He was no heresy-hunter, and

sincerely wished the man would hold his tongue. But Abijah, who was ashamed of his outrageous conduct of a few minutes ago, felt it a duty he owed himself to explain what was at the bottom of it. The boys, young as they were, had their interest aroused, and shadowy visions of banished Catechisms began to float before William's mind as the possible outcome of the conversation. His father, however, caught sight of the eager face, and, very much to his disappointment, told him to take Harry out and amuse themselves for a little while. Farley saw clearly enough that he was in for more than he bargained for, as sundry unearthly sounds were heard issuing from Abijah's throat which were supposed to be preparatory experiments of the strength of his vocal powers in view of the unwonted exercise soon to be indulged in. Mrs. Farley, who had just stepped into the bedroom with a steaming bowl of "yarb" tea, returned somewhat discomfited, saying that Mary was "sleepin' jest bootiful." Abijah's throat was by this time ready for the ordeal, and all three sitting down to dinner, he began :—

"Ez I was asayin', I aint ez steddy ez I was wanst. Howsumever, I meybbe wrong, an' then agen I mayn't. Ez I lay me head on th' piller, ez I lay deown t' sleep, 'taint sleep I git, but sech athinkin' an' athinkin' ez comes on beout 'lection an' 'fectool callin', that I git all in a muddle, an'—"

"Fill his cup, wife, fill his cup!" gasped the deacon with horror, as his worst fears were being realized. Abijah was clearly enough outside the covenant—given over from all eternity.

"Ivery night," he went on, passing his cup, "ivery night I lay athinkin' an' athinkin' 'beout the wan's dead an' gone. 'Twas 'pinted, o' coorse, that she must go eout that mornin', so 's t' die. Time'd come. So! Wal, I've

lay'n wake hours a thinkin', what ef I'd 'pinted meself not t' let 'er go eout that mornin'. What then—time'd not come eh?" and he looked up into his friend's face with a quick, searching glance that made the deacon wish he had been appointed to the North Pole, or some other outlandish place before he had come there to plague him with such heretical questions.

"'Pears t' me, deeken," he went on, laying down his knife and fork, "'pears t' me we've got suthin' tew dew here 'stead o' leavin' 't all tew 'lection an' 'fectool callin'!"

"Have a care, Abijah. Have a care how you speak! The Church will hear of this—Mr. Fenwick will hear of it. You drive me to it. I shrink from it; but my duty to God and the brethren compels me. Have a care, man—not another word now," he thundered as a vigorous repetition of the unearthly sounds gave unmistakable evidence that the "thinkin' an' athinkin'" had about only commenced. Abijah knew the deacon, however, and so very reluctantly relapsed into silence during the remainder of the meal. When they rose from the table he darted unceremoniously into the bedroom to look at Mary. He was for carrying her off in his arms asleep as she was, but a look from his host settled that, while Mrs. Farley, bustling about getting the boys' dinner, could not help exclaiming: "She's 'pinted tew stay till she's well, 'tanyrate, 'Bijah!"

CHAPTER V.

ABIJAH RECANTS.

It was several days before the deacon's family would admit that little Mary was fit to go home, although, truth to tell, she was as bright as a lark the next morning, and could have returned as easily as not, so far as her health was concerned. Her father did scarcely anything in the meantime but run back and forth between the two houses. He couldn't work, he said. Everything went wrong with him now Mary was away. The day "appointed" to let her go found him at Farley's bright and early, before the family had well got through with breakfast. On entering he sat down with a ludicrous appearance of mingled pleasure and perplexity. The deacon had been very reticent with him since the awful discovery of down-right heresy mentioned in our last. This morning he was more than usually grave. When his wife was getting the little one ready, wrapping her round and round in her own shawl and adding every conceivable article of clothing she could think of, till the poor thing could scarcely move or breathe, Abijah was restlessly twisting and twirling about on his chair. The deacon didn't notice him ; or at least pretended not to.

"Neow she's abeout reddy, ef she must be agoin'," exclaimed Mrs Farley, giving the last finishing touches to the child's wraps.

The father picked her up in his arms, made for the door, hesitated a moment, then put her down again and resumed his seat, where a repetition of his former performances were begun anew. Farley was getting nervous.

He expected nothing in the world but more heresy would be the outcome of all this extravagance.

"Wal," at length blurted out Abijah, as if driven to desperation by Farley's indifference, "Wal, I've ben athinkin' an' athinkin'——"

"Stop there, Abijah," thundered the deacon, determined to have no more of it in his house. "Stop just where you are. You said enough, and more than enough, the other day!"

Abijah looked more sheepish than ever at this unexpected outburst, and appeared uncertain what to do next; but, recovering himself, replied with considerable warmth:

"Wal, ef yer doan't want'er heer, no harm dun," and taking his child in his arms again made for the door.

"If you're not going to say anything against our holy religion and its blessed doctrines, say on," spoke Farley, relenting.

"Wal, I dunno," (putting Mary again on the floor,) "I dunno ef I'll say it neow, seein' yer not pleased-like this mornin'. Howsumever, I'm a poor miserable critter ez knows nothin'!"

This was something so altogether different from what was expected that Farley, greatly relieved, asked him to speak his mind freely.

"I've ben athinkin' and athinkin' as heow I did wrong t' other day in speakin' ez I did. Howsumever, ef yew'll say nothin' 'bout it t' th' minister, I'll never say 'nother word agin' 'lection, an' 'pintin', an' whatsoever ye call it!"

The deacon didn't know about that. He would see. He wasn't the kind of man to say one thing and do another. He refused positively to give any decided answer as to what he would do till he had time to think

the whole affair over. When the path of duty was clear, then he would follow it. If, after meditation, he was led to see that his duty was to be silent, then he would be silent. Otherwise not. Abijah had to be satisfied with this promise, and so, after several extra twitchings and twirlings, he seized his child again, and was off, this time for good.

"Strange bein'," exclaimed Mrs. Farley as the door closed after him with a bang. "Strange bein'; 'pears t' me he's daft!"

Nor was the good woman very far astray. Poor Abijah, never intellectually a giant, had puzzled his brain so long trying to comprehend "'lection and 'pintin'," as he called them, that it left him in a perfect maze. As the winter drew near, it was noticed by the neighbors that he became more and more dejected. He went to "Meetin'" regularly as ever, never missing a service; but it was apparent to all that he was little benefited by what he heard. He worried himself till his poor brain became paralyzed with the fearful thought, "What ef th' wan's dead an' gone wasn't 'lected?" What he heard in Meeting failed to solve this terrible question. Then, when he had thought it all over and had it settled that she certainly was among the favored few, he would be set off in a new frenzy of "thinkin' an' athinkin'" about himself and his two motherless children: "What ef I'm not 'lected meself? What ef Mary's not 'lected?" and the last would drive him almost to madness. Nothing but his love for the child, and her love for him, saved his reason from total collapse; for when the little Mary would see him in one of his moods, she would run to him, climb on his knee, put her chubby arms around his neck, and in a moment the "thinkin' an' athinkin'" would be at an end, at least for that time. He loved his Mary. His

love was scarcely human. It was the wild frenzy of the man who, feeling himself reeling on the brink of a horrible precipice, flings out his arms and grasps the tiny sapling growing on the heights above him. Well might he love her. She was both lovely and lovable. Unlike most children of her age, she was more of a woman than many double her years. Deprived of the tender care of a mother, she grew up, under the shadow of a great sorrow in her home, like a delicate flower hidden away among rank weeds from the life-giving energy of the sun. Not that she was a sickly flower. Far from it. But there was a weirdness about her even in her playful moments, that made the old crones of the neighborhood shake the head and tap the forehead significantly. She wasn't long for this world—that was clear enough—and Abijah would soon be alone with the boy. Such was the all but unanimous verdict. Such were the predictions, freely enough expressed, but which fortunately for the heart-broken father never came to his ears. He had but one ambition on earth now—to make his Mary happy. Strange methods did he adopt for this purpose, it is true; but the motive was pure, and He who readeth the heart no doubt judged from the motive and not from the act. Mary was not to associate with other children. It was definitely settled in the father's mind that some terrible evil would befall her if she did. As a sort of compromise, however, and feeling under a rude sense of gratitude to the Farleys, she was allowed to go there occasionally; while William made it a sacred duty to live fully up to his privileges and visit her every day. Poor Abijah came finally to look upon all this as part of the appointing business that it was useless for him to interfere with, and accordingly submitted to William's visits with as good a grace as could have been expected.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MINISTER EXPOUNDS THE DOCTRINES.

THE Rev. John Fenwick has already been casually introduced to the reader. Of good old Puritan stock, he had, after the completion of his studies, been called by the Woodside Church when in the full vigor of his young, strong manhood, and at the opening of our story had grown grey in its service. Genial in disposition, kind-hearted and amiable, generous to a fault, he went in and out among his people, the friend of all, the enemy of nothing save sin. Fully and conscientiously persuaded that the Westminster Standards were as the oracles of God, he had in season and out of season, proclaimed the eternal decrees of "'lectin', 'pintin', an' predestinatin'," as Abijah would call them, with a vim and a vigor that left nothing to be desired. That whatsoever came to pass, came to pass because it had so been ordered from all eternity, he no more questioned than he questioned what he considered the necessary corollary, that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to die" for it. The "world" here, of course, meant the elect. Yet with a strange inconsistency, his iron-cast creed was contradicted every day of his life. Wherever there was sorrow to be comforted, mourners to be cheered, poverty to be relieved, the dear old man would be found with a heavenly smile upon his face, a consolatory promise in his mouth, and very often something more tangible in his hand. If he saw in the conduct of any of his parishioners that which he judged might possibly lead to trouble in the future, it never entered into his calculations that the

threatened trouble might possibly be a part of the eternally appointed things; but he set himself to work with all his power to prevent it if he could. Nothing could be more out of keeping with its surroundings than the dignified figure of this venerable saint moving calmly among his rustic followers, his benignant countenance shining upon them, his long white hair fallingly gracefully upon slightly-stooped shoulders, as with stately step he went from house to house comforting those who mourned. In all the country side round about was he known as a cultured scholar, deeply versed in ancient lore—a profound thinker if not an eloquent preacher. His people loved him. Loved him? The word love does not convey their feelings. A veneration mingled with something very much akin to awe would more adequately set forth their regard for him. He was their friend,—a friend to whom at all times, day or night they had access; a friend ever ready to hear, a friend as ever ready to cheer. "What says the minister?" was the question always first asked when anything of public interest was discussed in the store of an evening or round the cheerful hearth in winter. When the minister had spoken let every opposing tongue be silent. While free with all, candid with all, friendly with all, he found in Deacon Farley a man after his own heart. The stern, common sense of the farmer had in it something altogether different from his neighbors. Deeply read in the Scriptures, he could enter fully into the inner life of his minister, listen to his subtle, metaphysical disquisitions with reverence, and if not always able to follow, always ready to assume an air of absorbed interest in the "doctrines," as became a deacon of the Church With the generality of his hearers Mr. Fenwick was as simple as a child, with Deacon Farley he threw off his simplicity

and poured out of the rich storehouse of a cultured mind nuggets of learned lore. In addition to his purely clerical duties, he conducted a school in his own house where the higher branches were taught *con amore* to all who desired it. It was the delight of his soul to get any of the young lads of the parish to attack the intricacies of the Greek and Latin languages. Here he was in his element. Farley had spent several winters with him before his marriage, and although never proficient as a scholar, he had nevertheless imbibed sufficient of his master's spirit to give him a cultivated speech possessed by few in the neighorhood.

Mr. Fenwick was a widower and childless. He had laid away his beloved in the lone graveyard on the hill, years ago—the mother and the baby—and he waited patiently to join them where there would be no more parting. He had found in Farley, even when a lad, that mysterious something which binds soul to soul; and now, when the one bent with years was waiting for the summons to go higher, and the other was strong in the vigor of his lusty manhood, there was something tenderly pathetic in the tie that bound them together.

A year had rolled by since Abijah had lost his wife. Many a long and earnest talk had the aged minister and the dejected widower in the meantime, but without any apparent results. It was therefore with rather a sorrowful heart that, having paid him one of his weekly visits, Mr. Fenwick wended his way over the hill to the Farley homestead. He was met by the deacon at the door with that dignified composure which so became him. It was a glorious evening in the latter part of August, and the minister intimating his desire to remain in the open air and enjoy the delicious breeze which came singing up from the meadows, a chair was brought by Mrs. Farley

for each, and they sat down just outside the door. Mr. Fenwick placed his hat beside him on the ground, and, with both hands clasped on the top of his cane, gazed dreamily off on the smiling fields stretching away in the distance, bounded by the fir-clad hills on the horizon. The sun was going down in a flood of light, tinging the clouds with a halo of glory. Far away could be seen the tired farm hands slowly returning to their homes, while ever and anon the soft cadence of some well-known hymn came whispering up on the breeze. The two friends gazed silently on the scene :

> "'These are Thy glorious works, Parent of Good,
> Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
> Thus wondrous fair, Thyself how wondrous then
> Unspeakable!'"

It was the minister's voice, then silence deep as the grave, till in tremulous accents again he spoke, quoting the sublime language of the Psalm : "'When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained ; what is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?'"

They looked at the sun, as disappearing like a shield of burnished gold behind the cloud-bank, it flung high its arms of light as if in adoration unto God :

"'But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and all the works that are therein shall be burnt up.'"

Their eyes were still directed toward the west, where the clouds swam in a sea of billowy glory :

"'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth ; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. And

God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain ; for the former things are passed away.' "

Then silence again, soon to be broken by the same tremulous voice :

"Thanks be unto God—thanks be unto God ! There is a time coming when there shall be no more death, no more tears, no more sorrow ! Were it not for this hope that has buoyed me up for years my heart must break within me,—no more death, no more sorrow, no more tears !"

"His ways are past finding out," responded the deacon in deep and solemn tones, feeling it incumbent on him to say something, as his friend paused and brushed his hand rapidly across his eyes.

"Past finding out ! When I think of His majesty, His power,—the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him —and then try to fathom the mystery of redeeming love, I am dumb. I can only cry, 'Unclean, unclean !'"

Then, after a pause : " 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love !' 'He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.' Deacon, mark the words, 'ordered in all things and sure.' No failure—no possibility of failure. This world shall be destroyed, all its beauty shall fade, and wither, and die ; the stars shall pale and go out in darkness, but the promises of Jehovah abide. 'He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.' "

"Yes, 'ordered and sure !' Mr. Fenwick," exclaimed the deacon with a trill of awe in his voice. "Mr. Fenwick, how strange that any should doubt the doctrines ! "

"Doubt the doctrines ? Who doubts the doctrines ?"

cried the minister, with a startled look. "No one here, I hope. No one in my parish can have been so led astray by the enemy as to doubt the doctrines. It can't be possible, deacon!"

"O, well, not just doubts them, sir; but—but—that is to say, don't understand them!"

"Don't understand them! Do *you* understand them, deacon; do *you* understand them? I have never understood them myself; and, what is more, I don't want to understand them. Why should I want to understand them? Is it not enough for me that God hath said?"

"Enough? Ay, more than enough; and heaven forbid that any should be so led captive of Satan as to want to understand them!" was the awe-struck reply.

"I don't understand," continued the minister after a moment's pause, "I don't understand how He made the worlds; enough for me that I am told in the Book, 'Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created; and Thou renewest the face of the earth.'"

"And yet there are those so perverse," put in the deacon, not able to banish Abijah from his mind, do what he would, "that they would dare question His dealings with man, failing to remember that He hath ordered all things from the beginning!"

"Doubtless there are such in the world. Satan entered Paradise, and one of the twelve was the son of perdition. What of it? 'He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.' Here is solid ground, deacon, here is solid ground. Look at the problem of life from any other standpoint than that of the decrees and all is confusion. The mind refuses to grasp it. As I study this awful theme my reason would be shattered as yonder cloudlet is shattered by the summer breeze, did I not know that with me He

hath made 'an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.' Think of it! I am here. I did not bring myself here. I am thrust into a world of sin, buffeted by Satan, assaulted by circumstances over which I can exercise no control. Am, I then, the victim of blind and stupid accidents, blown about like yonder thistle-down by the wind—now here, now there, now up, now down, finally to sink in the putrid stream of death—no power to save? Such a thought would hurl reason from its throne, could I believe it. But when I look upon myself in the light of the covenant, included from all eternity among those chosen to be heirs of salvation, I know intuitively, even were it not written, that He who chose me to eternal life chose also the circumstances of my surroundings, and nothing cometh upon me by accident. I am in the hands of One who hath foreordained all things whatsoever cometh to pass! Hence the darkest hour of sorrow is made radiant by the reflection of a face divine behind the clouds. 'He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.'"

The light had faded from the sky. Slowly rising, the minister grasped the deacon's hand, and, while the great tears trickled down his cheeks, bade his friend good-night and turned his footsteps slowly towards his home. Farley stood looking after him till the stately figure was lost in the gathering darkness.

CHAPTER VII.

FARLEY HAS A TALK WITH HIS WIFE.

"It appears to me," said the deacon to his wife one evening at supper, about a week subsequent to the conversation with the minister mentioned in our last; "it appears to me that we should send William to Mr Fenwick's school. I am very anxious that the lad should have the benefit of such an instructor before the Lord takes him!" There was an unusual huskiness in his voice as he uttered the last part of the sentence.

"Wal, I've no objections; it'll dew th' boy good, tho' as for that, he's young yet. Howsumever, I der say it's abeout time he tuk a turn at the high larnin' or whatever you call it."

The dear woman, much to the scandal of her husband, especially since he became a deacon, never improved on the vernacular of her girlhood.

Farley was silent for a moment. William had been absent all the afternoon at Abijah's, and it had dawned on the father's mind like a revelation as he was at work in the fields, that possibly the heterodox widower might occasionally have been airing his abominable heresy before the boy. He had never thought of it before. So anxious was he to comfort the two motherless children that it was with him a sacred duty, as before remarked, not to interpose objections to William's regular visitations. Now, however, he was in trouble. The mere thought of his boy swerving by a hairbreadth from "the doctrines" had in it something too terrible for words adequately to express.

"Wife," he at last began, "I'm not so sure whether it does the boy any good to be at Abijah's so much!"

Mrs. Farley opened her eyes very wide, as was her wont when anything absurd struck her. If her speech was uncultured, her heart and head were right. Possessed of strong common sense, added to an ardent, affectionate nature, she was in many respects superior to her dignified partner. She opened her eyes very wide at the bare suggestion of the simple-minded Abijah injuring any one. She could not make out how her husband had been led to so preposterous a conclusion. Before, however, she had time to frame a suitable reply, he began again:

"I had a long and profitable conversation with Mr. Fenwick on the mysteries the evening he was here, and I have thought of scarcely anything else since. I hinted to him the possibility of any one doubting the doctrines, not of course mentioning names, and the way he spoke—so energetically, yet so grandly, proves to me more than anything I ever heard from him before, that to doubt is to be damned. Yes, to doubt is to be damned! If we believe the doctrines, it is to my mind the surest evidence we can have in this world that we are in the covenant; while to disbelieve, gives as certain a sign of a reprobate heart. Now, while it is written, 'the promise is to you and to your children,' Mr. Fenwick reminded me—and I confess I was startled at the way he put it—he reminded me that even one of the chosen twelve was the son of perdition. That Abijah doubts the doctrines, we have heard with our own ears. What he said afterwards just goes for nothing in my mind. He doubts the doctrines, therefore he is clearly outside the covenant. Now, if outside the covenant, of course he has been given over to a reprobate heart from all eternity—passed by, so to speak, and will therefore inevitably be damned. It is then a question that has weighed

heavily on my mind, how far am I justified—that is to say, is it right for a child of the covenant, such as I apprehend William to be according to the promise just mentioned, 'to you and to your children,'—is it, in a word, my duty as a father, not to mention a deacon of the Church, to permit my boy to associate with reprobates and sinners, sons of Belial—"

"But," interrupted his wife, annoyed that her husband, instead of addressing her in plain words on the subject, was pouring forth his sentences as if at a Chureh meeting, "but, poor Abijah's not so bad arter all, an' for my part I doan't jest make eout heow William's bein' deown thar makes him 'sociate with sinners, seein' 'Bijah keeps no company!"

The deacon had used the plural number, as he often did when speaking in his official tone, either to add grace to his diction, or, as on this occasion, to soften the asperity of his remarks; for, to do the man justice, he was not quite satisfied with his own logic. He was looking for the path of duty. If he could find that, without harshness to Abijah, he would be all the better pleased.

"You see," he continued, scarcely heeding the interruption, "you see we must not let our hearts get the better of our heads. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it, says the Book, or words to that effect. I let the lad go down there, as it appears to me now, on sober reflection, I let him go down simply from the promptings of my heart. How am I to know but the heart in this case played me false? Abijah is not a wicked man. Granted. What of that? Is he a child of grace? That is the question. If a child of grace he would believe in the mysteries without questioning them. He does not. Then I conclude he is not a child of grace. I have no right to say a man

is a child of grace because he is not a bad man. From the remarks of our beloved minister added to my own imperfect interpretation of the Word, I judge otherwise. It is clear that no one can be included in the covenant who doubts the doctrines. Now, Abijah doubts the doctrines, as we have heard with our own ears. Then what says the Book: "Come out from among them," and more to the same purpose. So it is clear to me that William should not be in that man's house so often. The Apostle tells us not even to eat with such; his words, if I remember aright, are ——"

Mrs. Farley was as near being indignant as she ever was in her life with her husband. He was one of the best of men, but here her strong common sense saw that too much love for the mysteries was fast transforming him into a tyrant. "What," she exclaimed with warmth, "what's that the blessed Saviour sez? Sez He, forgive siventy times siven, jedge not that ye be not jedged, or some sech words. An' tho' I 'low I deont kno' ez much Scripter ez I orter, it 'pears to me that the 'postle Paul sez, sez he, faith, hope, charity, the best of th' three's charity!"

She had the sense if not the words, and the deacon felt the thrust and winced under it. He loved his wife in his own way, and well knew that when thus aroused to say anything in opposition to his own views, it was not from a desire to contradict but from intense conviction. Supper over, he drew his chair back to the window, remaining for several minutes in deep and silent abstraction. At length he spoke:

"Well, wife, it may be I have erred in being too hasty in my conclusions. I will meditate upon this again, but to deny the mysteries—" Here he stopped short, and was soon wrapped in profound meditation, from which he was aroused by the entrance of his son.

"William, come here."

The boy advanced to his father, who, taking him by the hand, looked steadfastly into the bright honest eyes:

"William, I want you to answer me as you have ever done, truthfully."

"Yes, father."

"Has Abijah ever said anything to you about the one that's dead and gone?"

"O yes, father, often."

"What has he been saying?"

"He has said a good deal one way and another."

"Do you remember his ever saying that she might not have died if she had not gone to hear the blessed Word that Sabbath morning?"

"Yes, he has said something like that more than once."

"Ahem! Did he say anything against the mys—that is, did he say if he had kept her home that morning she would have been alive to-day?"

"Yes, I often heard him say that."

"He did, eh? And what did you say, my son, to such horrible blasphemy?

"Oh, father, I did not know it was blasphemy; but I said the same thing."

"You said the same thing!"

"Yes, but—oh, dear! I'm sorry if it was wrong: it seemed right."

"Seemed right! What in the name of the—what does the boy mean? Seemed right! Have you had no better training than that? Seemed right! Is this all the effect my careful teaching has had? Wife, this passes belief! I am dumb with horror. Says it seemed right! Seemed right to say that a worm of the dust could prevent what had been decreed from all eternity! Boy, listen to me and answer as I question you!"

"Yes, father; but, oh dear——"

"Silence, sir; seemed right did it? This is all I've got in return for what I thought was my duty. The reprobate!"

The deacon was so terribly agitated that for the moment he had no very clear idea of what he was saying.

"Seemed right! Boy, listen to me. Does the Catechism say, or does it not say, that God has foreordained whatsoever cometh to pass?"

"It says that, father."

"Did Abijah's wife die?"

"Yes, of course, father!"

"Her death then came to pass, did it, or did it not?"

"Yes, father, it came to pass."

"How then did it come to pass according to the teaching of your Catechism, which is the teaching of God?"

The boy hesitated.

"Do you refuse to answer? Wife, the lad's ruined! Where's your Scripture, now, wife? Where is it? Quote Scripture if you please; we want it, heaven only knows! What shall I do? Did you hear my question, boy?"

"Yes, father; but——"

"But, sir, but! But what? What do you mean by your buts? Does a son of mine dare to put a but in opposition to the eternal decrees? But what, sir?"

"But, father, Abijah said the minister don't believe it himself!"

If the earth had literally opened at his feet the deacon could not have been more astounded. He hid his face in his hands for a moment, as if to shut out some horrible sight; then, looking up, he ordered the boy from the room. The poor lad, very much confused, was on the point of complying, when he was stopped by his father abruptly exclaiming:

"Stop! I may as well hear it all; there can be nothing worse to hear. What did he—what did Abijah mean by saying the minister did not believe it himself?"

"He said, father—oh please don't be angry with me!"

"Go on!"

"Abijah said, if the minister believed it himself he wouldn't have come there praying and doctoring against the decrees?"

"And what did you say? Answer, if you please, right out, without any buts."

"Oh, father, I'm so sorry; but I said that if it was any use to doctor and pray after she had got sick, perhaps if she hadn't gone out she wouldn't have got sick at all!"

"There, that will do. You may go!"

The deacon rose as the door closed after the boy and paced the floor. The sun went down and darkness filled the room, but he paced the floor. His wife retired to bed, but the slow measured tread of her husband's footsteps sounded through her sleep far into the night.

CHAPTER VIII.

ABIJAH CHARGED WITH HERESY.

BRIGHT and early the following morning the deacon knocked at the minister's door. Mr. Fenwick was delighted to see his friend, but was somewhat taken aback at the haggard face that presented itself before him.

"Come in, come right in here—no, let us go up to the study. You don't look well, deacon, this morning: you seem troubled. A world of trouble, brother—a world of

sin and trouble; but, for the elect's sake, the days will be shortened!"

The deacon failed to see the relevancy of the minister's quotation, but followed quietly up stairs into the cosey little study, where ponderous tomes frowned down upon them from the walls.

"Be seated, deacon; be seated and unburden your mind. What is the trouble, my friend? Has anything happened at home?"

"A great trouble, sir; a great trouble! Greater than I ever thought would overshadow my heart. But with the Psalmist can I yet exclaim, 'Although my house be not with God, yet hath He made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure!' You cheered my heart, sir, with these words the other evening; but to-day they are my only hope!"

"The last part of the quotation is a glorious one, deacon; but how can you apply the first part of it? Your house *is* with God, deacon, praise his name—your house *is* with God!"

Farley sighed deeply. "Alas, sir, it is not so!"

"What?" cried the minister in surprise, and half suspecting that too much study of the mysteries had upset his friend's mind, "what makes you talk so? The promise is to you and your children!"

"But one of the twelve was the son of perdition!"

Mr. Fenwick winced as he recalled his own words to the deacon a few days previously, but silently awaited developments. After a slight pause Farley unburdened his mind in the matter of Abijah, concluding by entering a formal charge against him to be regularly brought up at the next monthly Church meeting. Having thus relieved his soul by the performance of what he now considered a sacred duty, he solemnly shook the minister by the hand and took his departure.

"This is bad. This is very bad," soliloquized Mr. Fenwick when again alone, "this *is* perplexing. Who would ever have thought it? That a man of poor Abijah's mental calibre should doubt the doctrines! But there is where the trouble comes in. He is weak, and him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. To discuss the mysteries with Abijah would indeed be doubtful. It will never do. I must go over at once and put him to rights, if I can, without doubtful disputations!" and so saying he sallied forth in the direction of the widower's cottage, but, however, without very sanguine hopes of success, as past experience gave him little encouragement.

Abijah was at home when the minister arrived. He suspected something was brewing in which he himself was to be included; for, however dull in intellectual apprehension, he would need to have been duller than he was had he not connected the present visit with the solemn stride of the deacon past his door a few minutes previously.

"Well, Abijah, I am come this morning to talk to you as your minister and best earthly friend."

"Yez, sur, o' coarse," was the dry remark of the widower, who never could disconnect the death of his wife from the long sermon she had the last time heard upon earth.

"You see, I am above all things anxious that you should be comforted in your affliction by a reliance on the divine providence."

"Jest so."

"Deacon Farley—"

"Eh!" interrupted Abijah, with a quick, furtive look out of his dull eyes, as much as to say: "I told you so."

"Deacon Farley," continued Mr. Fenwick, "has

brought a charge against you for heresy. It is an awful charge, Abijah; no less a charge than doubting the doctrines!"

"Dew ye mean 'pintin' an' 'lectin'?"

"Yes, that is about what I mean—doubting the decrees.

"Wal, I'm not so shure but th' deeken's abeout right. Howsumever, I 'lowed t' him that I wus a poor, miserable critter ez knew nothin'; but neow that he's gone an' brought me afore th' Church, I doant know but I'll stan' whar I stud when th' wan's ded an' gone died."

"Where did you stand then, Abijah?" asked the minister in a sorrowful and sympathetic voice.

"Agin' 'pintin' an' 'lectin' and th' hull batch o' them thar dekrees. Sur, beggin' yer parding fur bein' so bold, but blow high or blow low, I'm agin' 'pintin'. I see I've no wan to stan' by me; I'll stan' by meself."

"You have some one to stand by you, Abijah—a friend who sticketh closer than a brother; more than that, I'll stand by you myself, Abijah. We all wish you well; we want to help to cheer and comfort you. I as your minister do not want to trouble you about those deep things. Let them alone."

"Thar! That's what I told William, deeken's son, who'll cum heer tho' no wan wants 'im heer. Sez I: 'Them deep things air tew deep for me, William.'"

"Well, well, Abijah, I want you to give me your word, now that you are sorry for what you said to the deacon and his boy. I want you to say that you believe the doctrines and—"

"Yew want me tew tell a lie, do yew, Mr. Fenwick?" cried the man with such warmth and earnestness that the amazed minister rose mechanically to his feet; "yew want me to tell yew a lie? I doant b'lieve in no 'pintin'

an' 'fectual callin', an' I'm agoin' tew tell no lies abeout it!"

"You misunderstand me altogether, Abijah; you misunderstand me! I would not ask you to do any wrong, much less to tell a falsehood. You know that, and you do me a great injustice to say so. What I ask you is this: Will you promise to say nothing *against* the doctrines to any one—man, woman or child?"

"Wal, that seems kinder different, beggin' yer parding for what I sed; that seems different. But, yew see, I promised the deekin jest what yew ask. But he wasn't clar what tew dew abeout it—jooty, yew kno'. Wal, neow, he 'pears t' be clar; I'm clar tew."

"Then you won't promise?"

"I didn't say that adzackly."

"Well, then, you promise?"

"Didn't say that aythur, Mr. Fenwick."

"Well, what do you say, then? Let me understand you, if you please."

"Wal neow, minister, I promise ef ye'll tell me what for yew prayed and doctored th' wan's ded an' gone? Ef you thort she was 'pinted to go, she'd go. Why pray an' doctor?"

"Why, Abijah, this is absurd. How should I know she was appointed to die till she died?"

"Wal, ef she was 'pinted t' go that time, she'd go; ef not, not. Anyway, I doant jest see whar the prayin' an' doctorin' came in—that's all!"

"So you are not satisfied with my answer?"

"I'm not."

"And you'll keep on speaking against the decrees?"

"I didn't say that ayther."

"Then you won't?"

"Look aheer neow, Mr. Fenwick, ef th' deekin 'll

leave me tew meself, and keep his botherin' boy tew hum, I may dew suthin'. He sends him heer ter find eout mysteries, duz he? Eh, Mr. Fenwick?"

"Now, Abijah, you wrong both Mr. Farley and his boy. They are your friends—we are all your friends, but it appears to me William will not trouble you as much as formerly."

The promise was given on these conditions, the minister ratifying the bargain by leading in prayer, after which he immediately took his departure for Mr. Farley's. Arriving at the deacon's it was settled upon, with the consent of all parties, that William's visits to Abijah should be considerably curtailed, and that in the course of a couple of months he should be enrolled as one of Mr. Fenwick's students. William took kindly enough to the last part of the arrangements, but, boy-like, could see no necessity for the restrictions imposed upon him, although, as in duty bound, promising obedience. The matter was compromised by the mother agreeing that Harry and his sister should visit them every other day, providing their father offered no objections. When approached on the subject Abijah did not like it at all; but after a great amount of feminine generalship and tact, Mrs. Farley carried her point, the simple-minded widower having a profound respect for the woman who had always been so kind to the "wan's ded an' gone."

CHAPTER IX.

A YOUNG HERETIC.

WILLIAM was duly enrolled as a student of the "high larnin'," as his mother persisted in calling it, early in the autumn, and during the following winter made such progress in his studies as to surprise his dear old tutor, as well as astonish his stern but affectionate father. Serious thoughts about this time began to enter the deacon's mind as to whether his boy was not clearly intended for the Church. He never hinted such a thing, however, to Mr. Fenwick. Modesty kept him silent here, for well he knew his pastor would speak out in good time. The winter wore pleasantly away with all parties. Abijah was about the same, still dejected and worn, with a haggard look upon his withered face. He had sacredly maintained silence in the matter of "'pintin' and 'lectin'," in accordance with his promise to the minister. Harry and Mary grew apace, always welcome at the deacon's, and, weather permitting, always ready to test their welcome. Farley himself was in his element during the long cold nights sitting by the blazing fireside poring intently over his Bible or diving into Matthew Henry's great Commentary —a recent loan from the pastor's library. William would sit on the opposite side of the table deeply immersed in the intricacies of the "high larnin'," while the mother, with Carlo at her feet, kept knitting away for dear life as if the welfare of all depended on the performance. She was very happy just now, bless her heart, why shouldn't she? William was happy and that was enough. How she loved the boy! A tear would get into her eye, do

what she would, as she sat there of an evening watching him at his book. Then she would drop a stitch or pretend she had dropped one, which was the same thing. It gave her a chance to brush her hand rapidly across her face without being seen as she bent low over her stocking. God bless the dear mother, her heart was in the lad—and who could blame her, who looked on the curly head, or caught a glimpse of his frank, winsome face?

It was on one of those never-to-be-forgotten evenings, upon which they all looked back with dimmed eyes in the after years, that as the father reluctantly closed his Commentary, William appealed to him for help in the rendering of a certain passage that had baffled him for hours. "Alas, my son," sighed the father returning the book that had been passed to him, "alas, my son, I cannot help you. Whatever I knew of it is gone—vanished long ago. But I commenced late, and to tell the truth, I had other things on my mind at the time that sorely hindered me in my studies." And he actually looked over roguishly at his wife, who of course pretended never to have heard a word. But she did hear a word. She heard what sent her heart thumping against her side as he spoke; and she lost a stitch, or pretended to have lost one, which amounts to the same thing. Long and patiently did she look for the stitch, her head bent low down over her work. But the husband did not see the great tears that fell thick like rain and blinded her; for if he had, he would have been greatly amazed and puzzled to make it out. His look and words had recalled sunny memories of the long ago. Ah, the long ago, when there was nought but love between them talked from morn till night, and neither mysteries nor doctrines were ever thought of, or if thought of kept in their place. It was not so now. He loved her just the same, so he imagined, for she was just

the same she had ever been. She hadn't changed a bit, she was certain herself. And she would give the world, if she owned it, to go over and put her arms round his neck, right then and there, as in the olden time when William was a baby, and the doctrines were in—well, the Bible or the Catechism, whichever you will. But she hadn't been on his knee she couldn't remember when, and —oh, dear! he was a deacon now! He would have been shocked and scandalized had she followed the promptings of her heart, and thrown herself in his arms for a good old-fashioned cry. But there he was meditating already in the straight-backed chair, which, not being the Sabbath, he had tipped back slightly. There he was in all the official dignity of a pillar of the Church, with half-closed eyes deep in the doctrines, nor would he have believed it had any one told him that a minute ago he had come precious near to cracking a joke with his wife. Such a thing as a joke had never escaped his lips since the day he had been elevated to the diaconate.

"William, dear, put up th' book for th' night," said the fond mother, lifting her head and smiling on the boy as if such things as dropped stitches had never happened in all the history of stocking-making; "put up th' book, dear, an' go t' bed. Yer killin' on yerself with it."

William put up the book, but the father, recalled by his wife's voice from the misty regions where he had been revelling among doctrines and decrees, let the chair down to a perpendicular; and straightening himself to a position all but Sabbatic in rigidity, turned towards his boy:

"William, has Mr. Fenwick spoken to you much of late about the doc——that is, has he been explaining the awful mysteries of the Word more than usual?"

He threw this out as a feeler. His mind had been getting somewhat troubled lately over the strange reti-

cence of the minister anent his son's call to the holy work.

"Not more than usual, father. He says something every day."

"Ah, yes, to be sure—of course, good man, dear good man, holy man, may he long be spared to go in and out among us. What a glorious life, my boy; what a glorious life is that of the ministry! Think of the dignity conferred on a worm of the dust to be permitted to expound the fearful mysteries of the Word!"

The boy pushed his book farther from him with a sigh. He hadn't got on well to-night, and he felt considerably disgusted with himself in consequence. His father continued:

"I suppose Mr. Fenwick has frequently spoken of the great honour conferred on a worm of the dust in being permitted to explain the living oracles?"

"I don't just remember his saying anything particular about it," replied the boy. His speech was becoming quite as polished if not as pompous as his father's.

"No? That's strange—decidedly strange. But he has certainly been explaining to you, from time to time, the wondrous harmony of the Scriptures in the matter of the decrees?"

Mrs. Farley moved nervously in her chair, and ventured to gently hint that it was time the boy was in bed; but the deacon didn't hear her, or if he did he didn't heed.

"I was remarking," he continued, with a shade of asperity in his voice; "I was remarking, William, that Mr. Fenwick has, no doubt, time and again made plain to you and the others the wonderful harmony of the Word respecting the decrees. You have before this, I know, been fully persuaded that God has foreordained all things whatsoever cometh to pass, and that even the wicked

have been created by Him to be damned to all eternity, in praise of His glorious justice?"

William had been persuaded of just nothing of the kind, and he was too truthful to say so when he hadn't. He saw trouble ahead, however, and determined to avoid it if he could without telling a lie. That he wouldn't do.

"O yes, Mr. Fenwick often dwells on these points—every day, in fact, he explains them to us."

"And you are, of course, satisfied with his explanations?"

The question was too pointed to be avoided; he must answer it or lie.

"Mr. Fenwick explains those dark things in clear and beautiful language."

The father turned sharply upon him those great, grave eyes of his, before which so many of his neighbours had flinched.

"William, you are evading my question. I asked nothing about the elegance of Mr. Fenwick's diction. Do you believe—do you accept his explanations?"

"I do not, father."

Brave boy! There he sat calmly looking into his father's blanched face. He had been driven to it. Now, come what would, he would stand his ground.

"You—do—not?"

"I do not, father."

"Boy, you are scarcely twelve years old, and yet you presume to question the wisdom of the ages!"

"Father, the ages may have been wrong! It is not a question of the ages, but of the Bible. Does the Bible teach that God created the wicked to damn them? The Church did not always hold those views—does not now hold those views throughout the world."

"Ha! You have been reading something besides your

text-books, I see. But enough of that. Am I to understand that Mr. Fenwick is aware of your heresy?"

"Mr. Fenwick knows, father, that thus far I have not been able to believe that the all-merciful God created men and women to damn them to the praise of His glorious justice!"

"Indeed! This is frank. I admire frankness! Now that I think of it, I always admired frankness! But enough of that. You don't believe, then, that God has chosen a certain number in Christ unto everlasting glory before the foundation of the world, according to His immutable purpose and of His free grace and love, without the least foresight of faith, good works, or any conditions performed by the creature, and that the rest of mankind He was pleased to pass by and ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sins, to the praise of His justice?"

"Father, I'm sorry to hurt your feelings, but——"

"Well?"

"I believe just nothing of the sort!"

"That will do. Put your book on the shelf! You will have no further use for it!"

"Oh, father, I——"

"Silence, boy. Put your book on the shelf and go to bed. Your education is finished—more than finished. I'll see Mr. Fenwick in the morning."

"Oh, father, I——"

"Silence! Do you hear what I said? Go to bed at once—instantly!"

The boy obeyed. The father shut his eyes and straightened himself up in the straight-backed chair to a rigidity of position as if a dozen Sabbaths had suddenly been rolled into one. The mother dropped an innumerable multitude of stitches as she swayed and rocked in her seat, but she could not find them this time. She arose

and crept softly to her room, and, falling on her knees, poured forth her heart cries to One who heareth in secret. When she opened her eyes the next morniag at break of day she found that the place beside her had remained unoccupied. All through the night the deacon had sat by the fire in the straight-backed chair. The haggard face which turned appealingly towards her as she came out into the kitchen smote her to the heart. Her strong common sense told her, however, this was a time for silence, not words. It was a time for tears!

CHAPTER X.

THE DEACON ARRIVES AT LOGICAL CONCLUSIONS.

"So my unhappy boy is among those that perish!"

It was Deacon Farley's voice. He stood face to face with his pastor in the little study up stairs, whither he had been ushered by Mr. Fenwick's housekeeper. For some minutes after entering he had remained silently seated staring with vacant eyes up at the great books on the shelf, as if he hoped for some glimmer of light to dawn upon him from the ponderous folios. The minister sat opposite at his writing-desk in blank amazement at the dejected appearance of his friend. He had spoken several times, but had received no answer.

"So my unhappy boy is among them that perish!"

He repeated the chilling words in a grating voice that smote the clergyman with an undefinable dread.

"What do you mean, deacon? Your language is an enigma to me! What is the matter, I pray you?"

"Matter? Oh, I did not think when I came here we would need any explanations. I had supposed you were merely waiting for an opportunity to speak!"

"Deacon, you surprise me, and I must beg of you to be more explicit, if you please. Explain yourself!"

"O, certainly, if there is any need of explanations! You are, of course, in perfect ignorance of the opinions held by my unfortunate son!"

This was said in a mocking tone, that instantly aroused the native dignity of his pastor, who immediately exclaimed with warmth and vigour:

"Deacon Farley, whatever else I may be ignorant of, I am not ignorant of the respect which an officer of the Church owes to his minister. You appear, however, for once in your life, to have forgotten it and to have left your manners at home!"

"Pardon me, Mr. Fenwick, if I have spoken rudely," cried Farley with emotion, "the shock has been more than I have been able to bear. I have slept none last night, and scarcely know what I am saying this morning! But were you a father, and your son——"

The minister had risen to his feet, crossed the room, and here grasped his friend's hand. "I did not mean to hurt your feelings, deacon. Tell me all your trouble: you alarm me—what has happened?"

"My unfortunate boy is given over—doomed from all eternity!"

"Deacon!"

"He told me frankly last night that you had failed to satisfy his mind about the decrees. He doubts, and—and, of course, is lost!" and the wretched father, covering his face with both his hands, swayed to and fro in his seat like a reed shaken in the wind.

"But, deacon——"

"Pardon, me sir; I know you will try to comfort me, but it is useless. I did not come here for comfort this morning, but simply to tell you, that William cannot attend your school longer. To give him any more learning would be only to add to his condemnation. 'To whom much is given, of him much shall be required.'"

The minister returned to his seat, remaining for some minutes in profound abstraction. At length he spoke—

"You are right and you are wrong, deacon. I have known this all along about your son's views, as you surmise. I have said nothing about it, feeling assured that he will come to see his error as he grows older, and feel confident that this is but a device of the enemy, permitted by God as a trial of our faith."

"All that you say, sir, has been duly weighed in the balances of my mind last night and found wanting. The boy is as clearly outside the covenant as was Esau! All your preaching and all my own reading go to prove that a child of grace never questions the doctrines."

"Not when he comes to years of maturity, but William is yet a lad, and——"

"Pardon me again. He is a lad, true; so was Daniel a lad, and Samuel when the Lord spake to him, and Timothy, who knew the Scriptures from childhood. There is no hope for me—the boy is lost—lost!" and the heart-broken man groaned aloud.

"Send him to me again, deacon; send him to me to-day: send him one day more at least. If I fail to bring him round, then I will be led to believe that what you say is true, and must bow reverently before Him who maketh one vessel to honor and another to dishonor."

"It is useless, Mr. Fenwick, useless. Besides my word is pledged and I never can break it, nor will I try to. The boy knows that. He is not to go to school any more

Again the minister was silent, and again the deacon spoke:

"Mr. Fenwick, there is one thing, however, you can do for me. It is now my principal trouble—indeed, it was that which especially brought me here this morning. What am I to do with the boy?"

"What do you mean? I don't understand you!" cried the minister, in evident alarm, fearing for the man's mind.

"I mean simply this: What is the path of duty?"

"Duty?"

"Yes, duty. I have thought it all over and am perplexed and confounded. Cain was driven forth, and Ishmael was driven forth, and——"

"Stop, sir! Stop right where you are. This is astounding!" and again the aged clergyman was upon his feet, this time to pace the floor excitedly. "Stop, deacon, not another word of this as you value my friendship or fear my censure. This is past belief. Have I then spent my labour here in vain? Deacon Farley," and he stopped short before his chair, looking him fair in the eyes: "Deacon Farley, answer me this one thing: Have you ever in those years heard from the pulpit anything that would lead you to harbour such barbarous thoughts—yes, barbarous thoughts—as I surmise are now in your mind? Have your ever? Answer me!"

"I have, sir, most decidedly."

"You have?"

"I have!"

"Deacon, have a care!"

"I have a care. I am not speaking at random. You have repeatedly set forth the justice of such an act as I now contemplate. If not directly, then by implication. And, sir, let me say this, with all due respect for you,

even had I not drawn as much from your sermons, my own private reading and common sense would lead me to precisely the same conclusions."

"If I have ever used language from which you could draw such abominable conclusions, I am humbled in the very dust before my Maker at the thought of it, and may He mercifully forgive me!" exclaimed the minister in tremulous tones, as the tears gushed unbidden to his eyes.

Under ordinary circumstances such an exhibition would have unmanned Farley completely, but he felt this morning like another Abraham going forth to slay his son. It was not a matter of sentiment with him at all, but a stern question of duty. What was his duty? Let Mr. Fenwick show him the path of duty by an appeal to the law and to the testimony, and he would gladly walk in it. Perfectly unmoved, therefore, by his pastor's deep emotion, he advanced to the argument with terrible composure:

"This is not a matter of feeling, sir. 'The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.' I fear I have followed the promptings of my deceitful heart too far and too faithfully in this matter. Let the Scriptures decide this point for me, and, though my deceitful heart break within me, I will follow the Scriptures."

"Upon what Scriptures do you base your erroneous conclusions, deacon?" cried the minister, with a tinge of asperity in his voice.

"With all due respect, sir, let me say again I cannot allow that my conclusions are erroneous on the word of any man, even though that man be my own minister! Do the Scriptures prove them erroneous? That is the question."

"Go on."

"The Apostle Paul, writing to the Galatians, says: 'But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.' This unhappy child of mine has preached another gospel. What follows? Either that the Holy Spirit has lied, or the boy is ac——"

"Stop, stop! You are wresting Scripture to your own destruction. The passage means nothing like what you would have it. Be careful, sir, or you will bring on your own head the curse that you are trying to fasten upon your innocent boy!"

"Innocent boy?"

"Yes, innocent boy."

"Did—you—say—innocent—boy?"

"I said innocent boy!"

The deacon rose solemnly and slowly. "If it has come to this, our interview is at an end. The matter passes out of our hands altogether. It will take more than one minister and one deacon to settle it."

"I understand you perfectly, sir, but regard not your threat, no—no more than I do the idle wind which howls this morning round my dwelling. Nor so much! You have gone too far, Deacon Farley, as you may yet find to your cost."

Farley was not prepared for this. He had never seen his pastor exhibit such a spirit. There was something grandly dignified in the old man's face as he stood there, a tower of strength, strong in the consciousness of right. The deacon resumed his seat mechanically, and after an embarrassed silence of a minute or two went on—

"I beg your pardon again, Mr. Fenwick. I can only plead the terrible blow that has fallen on me as my excuse. I am sorry I spoke so."

"My pardon is instantly granted. Now let us hear what it is you would do to your son."

"If I am right—and I think I am—the boy has preached to me last night a different gospel—a gospel different from what you preach—a gospel different from that preached by Paul. What follows? Only one conclusion, although it pierces me to the heart to say it; but what has my deceitful and desperately wicked heart to do with it? Clearly nothing. There is, I say, but one conclusion. Having preached another gospel from that preached by Paul, my boy is, according to Paul, accursed. If not accursed, he is a 'railer,' and what says the same apostle about railers? 'I have written unto you not to keep company . . . with such an one, no not to eat!' Here, sir, is the position in which I am placed: my natural feelings on the one hand, and the word of God on the other. What am I to do? I must obey God rather than man, and—so the boy goes out from my house a wanderer and a fugitive on the face of the earth, unless you can show me that my interpretation is wrong."

"It *is* wrong, deacon—it is altogether wrong. You are entirely astray. Scripture cannot contradict itself. That is one of the universally recognized canons of interpretation. If your interpretation would appear to lead to the commission of a crime you may be certain it is wrong. It so leads you. If Paul says what you quote, he has also said, 'and ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' He also said, 'Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; . . . beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.' The course which you have in this matter marked out for yourself is not only the reverse of that charity which 'suffereth

long and is kind,' but it is unhuman, barbarous, and devilish."

"Mr. Fenwick, I just want to ask you one question."

"Ask on, if you please, I will answer you."

"Have you not repeatedly said, privately as well as publicly, that a child of grace would not question the doctrines? That it is, in a word, a sure sign of one's being included in the covenant if he implicitly believes the mysteries?"

"I have said so, no doubt. But I have also said that a child of grace may fall into grievous sin, though he can never be utterly cast off. Peter denied his Master. Paul was a persecutor, and——"

"Excuse me, sir, for again interrupting you. It is useless to proceed. Your answers do not satisfy me. I am convinced that I am right, and once so convinced nothing can move me. The boy must go!"

"Must go?"

"Yes, though my heart break, I must obey the Scriptures. With a railer, 'no not to eat!'"

"Then, deacon, I charge you with——" but before he could finish the sentence his voice was drowned by a tap at the door, followed by the housekeeper thrusting her head into the room, exclaiming:

"Here's William, bound tew come in!"

Before either of the surprised men could speak, the boy brushed past the woman into the study, rushed up to his father, and, with his eyes full of tears, sobbed out:

"Oh, father, I did wrong—I did wrong last night. Let me come to school again, and Mr. Fenwick may yet get me out of this trouble! I don't know anything yet, but——"

"William!" cried the deacon, the stern look on his face evidently giving way; "William, do you, or do you

not, believe the mys—— that is, do you believe your Catechism?"

"I do father! I do believe it! Some things I don't yet understand; but I hope to some day. I promise to spend more time on it if you will let me come back to school!"

"There, deacon, there; forgive the boy. Leave him to me! He says he don't understand some things yet. We're all in the same predicament! I will bring him round. There is no doubt in my mind but I will bring him round. He will yet be as strong in the faith as either of us. Leave him to me, deacon; leave him to me. Forgive the lad! He's a brave, good lad, only wanting careful training!"

The dear old man was so excited by this time that he rose from his seat and grasped Farley by the hand. The stern face began working nervously. He was giving way in good earnest. In another moment he would be unmanned before his boy, and never forgive himself in consequence. With a desperate effort at composure he finally managed to say:

"William! Mr. Fenwick has prevailed. You will have another chance! See you how you will improve it!"

Then the door closed after him, and the master and pupil were alone.

CHAPTER XI.

SOME THINGS ARE PROMISED, OTHERS FORGOTTEN, AND MORE BEGUN.

SEVERAL minutes elapsed after the deacon's departure before the minister could speak. When he did, it was apparent even to William what a fiery ordeal had been passed through.

"This must never happen again, my boy ; this must never happen again. You have got to make up your mind to accept the doctrines, or the consequences to us all will be deplorable. Your father is not a man to be trifled with. Before we go a step further, you must promise me one thing. Unless you promise, it will be useless for you to proceed with your studies."

"I'll promise, sir, anything that you ask, because I know you will ask nothing that is wrong !"

"Thank you, thank you, my dear boy, for your confidence. Now, the promise is this : You are never to say a word against the doctrines from this time forth till, at least, you are a man, should the Lord spare you so long. Will you promise that ?"

"Yes, sir. I never said anything till father questioned me, and I had to answer. If he question me again, I'll have to answer again, I suppose ; but I'll never speak a word, you may be sure, if left alone."

"There, that will do. Study the Catechism and Bible and your father will not be likely to trouble you. He is a man of stern integrity, and one, I repeat, not to be trifled with ;" which last was, to William, altogether an unnecessary piece of information.

The remainder of the winter passed away rapidly and pleasantly with our friends, nothing further having happened to mar the intercourse between the minister and the deacon. In fact, each respected the other now all the more since their heated discussion. Along with this respect was mingled a something very much akin to fear. They were pleased to have got out of the delicate position in which they had been placed with no further loss of personal prestige ; and the feeling uppermost in the mind of each was not to do or say anything that might lead them again to cross swords, if it could be conscientiously avoided. Nor was Farley any the more desirous to question his son's orthodoxy. He could not fail to have his respect for the lad considerably heightened when he recalled his truthful avowal of difficulties in the matter of the decrees. His sober thoughts, too, led him to see that he had been a little too hasty with the boy. Had William been disposed to equivocate, he might have given an apparent assent to what he inwardly disbelieved. The deacon made up his mind that, if his son did not force him to it, it would be a long time before he would again get himself into the predicament from which he had come forth, by no means with flying colours. It was, we may be sure, with a great amount of secret satisfaction, then, that he marked, as the winter rolled along and the spring approached, William appeared more and more to study his Catechism and Bible. The progress made in his other studies, too, had been something remarkable, as Mr. Fenwick had said more than once, and again the fond father's heart took hope that his boy might, after all, be a "chosen vessel" to stand in the holy place. But, alas ! he little knew that the deeper the young student plunged into the mysteries, the deeper the mysteries appeared unto him, till at last he was in a labyrinth of

bewilderment in which predestination, reprobation, effectual calling, and the impeccability of grace struggled for the mastery. The father, happily for his own peace of mind, knew nothing about it, and went on dreaming of the day when William should start for college to prepare for the holy office.

Two years had now rolled away since Abijah Oliver had parted from the "wan's dead an' gone." Years of darkness had they been to the unhappy man—a darkness but little brightened by the consolations of religion. Abijah had, like William, got more and more muddled over the decrees as he kept on "athinkin' an' athinkin'." Like the deacon's boy he failed to see, stupid as he was, the infinite love of God revealed in creating the wicked for the "day of wrath," as he was constantly hearing proclaimed from the pulpit. Unlike the young student, however, he had neither the judgment nor ability to study the subject for himself. He quietly let go his moorings and drifted helplessly on the current. Whither the current was going—whither it would finally land him he knew not, cared not. He too had promised to keep his mouth shut, and shut he would keep it though he might be dashed upon the rocks. He felt that he had been hardly dealt with in the loss of his partner, and he mourned over it in silence, failing to see either mercy or justice in it. Yet to no living soul would he breathe a word of his troubles. He had long since withdrawn his objections to William's frequenting his house, and the old state of things was going on as before with no word of complaint being raised against it. He loved his children with a more passionate devotion, perhaps, than ever, and he remarked, dull as he was, that the little ones appeared happier in the company of their young friend than with himself. He accepted the inevitable. Towards William,

however, he bore an inward dislike. He looked upon him as a spy, and it was not much to be wondered at that their intercourse was the reverse of cordial. He would leave the house when the lad came in, or send Harry and the little one out into the fields, if the weather permitted, when the hour of the customary visit drew near. The young student, on the contrary, pitied the unhappy man from his heart, longing for the day when, relieved from his promise to the minister, he would be able to cheer him as he himself had been cheered. He would, so hoped the sanguine lad, set forth such views of the goodness of God as the old walls of the Meeting-house had never echoed. He would do it, he thought. Yes, he would do it without waiting till Mr. Fenwick gave him permission; but he would do it without violating his sacred promise. He would do it and could do it without speaking a word against the doctrines. And so he bided his time, praying that the time might not be long.

Little Mary grew apace. Every month added to her sweet loveliness. She was the personification of grace and childish beauty. Timid, shy, bashful, she seemed, as before remarked, like some rare exotic, which, by a strange freak of nature, had been transplanted from a clime afar to bloom luxuriantly amidst rough and rugged surroundings. As unlike the other children of the neighborhood as it was possible to be, she shrunk from them instinctively, remaining silent and abashed if for a moment she was thrown into their presence. In her eyes Harry and William were beings of a different order from all other young people. What they did was right. What they wouldn't do, of course it was unlawful for any one to do. They were as superior to herself, she thought, as to all the others. It never once entered into her confiding little heart that either of them could think or do

anything that was not entirely proper in every particular. Harry was a kind of deity in her eyes—a demigod she would have called him had she been older and knew the meaning of the word. William ranked next to Harry. Sometimes she almost thought he was even superior to Harry; but no, that wouldn't do either. When she came to turn it over in her mind she saw the folly of such a surmise. Harry was, of course, everything. William was only older and went to school to the minister. Wait till Harry was older and went to school to the minister! Why, what wonderful things he would learn and teach her! Teach her? Aye, and teach William too; for it was a sacred conviction with the little thing that her brother would only have to look into a book to know everything that was in it forthwith.

Such were the crude thoughts that were coursing through her mind as she sat one evening with the two boys out under the shadow of the great beech-tree near the door. William was pouring into the attentive ears of his young friends the mysteries—not his father's mysteries this time, by long odds—but the mysteries of what his mother still persisted in calling the "high larnin'." He had paused, almost out of breath, when Harry exclaimed:

"O, dear, but I'd like to know a little about them things too!"

"You would, would you?"

"O, I'd give anything t' learn. I can only read just a little bit, an' Mary can read only just a little bit. I can't write, an' Mary can't write either!"

"Well, I never thought of it before. How strange. But now it's settled!"

"What's settled, William?" asked Mary, demurely looking at him in her own sweet way, somewhat surprised at the animated face of the boy.

"What's settled? Sure enough, I haven't told you, have I? Well, see here! Now I can just as well, and for that matter, far better, teach you two some of these great things as not."

"You don't mean it, William, you don't mean it, now, do you?" shouted Harry, his eyes glowing with delight; "O, you don't mean to teach Mary and me all these grand and fearful things you have been atellin' on us?"

"Yes, I do too," sententiously remarked their friend; "yes, I do too."

"When—O, do tell us, when, when will we begin?"

"When will we begin? Well, let me see: this is Friday, to-morrow's Saturday, next day Sunday. School will commence here next Monday afternoon at 4 o'clock."

"O, this is grand! Won't father be proud," roared Harry, jumping to his feet and whisking round and round as was his habit when very much excited.

"This is grand, Mary—hooroar! Won't father be pleased, though?" and the crazy fellow rolled over on the grass in the most ridiculous manner. Mary didn't say anything, though she was wonderfully pleased herself, whatever her father might be when he came to hear of the arrangement. And thus in a few minutes, without any previous forethought, boy-like was arranged a scheme which was afterwards most successfully carried out, and proved of incalculable benefit to the two motherless children.

CHAPTER XII.

FORESHADOWING OF GREAT EVENTS.

If we take the time-honored liberty of passing over, with a turn of the pen, a period of several years from the evening when the youthful trio, under the shadow of the beech-tree by Abijah's door, arranged their educational plans for the future, who will say us nay, when the shadows of great events are looming up so portentously on the horizon of our story as to obscure all matters of minor importance? Happy have been those years, all in all, to our friends. Deacon Farley is a shade graver than when last we saw him, and sits if possible more stiffly of a Sabbath in his straight-backed chair. His faithful wife is the same sweet-tempered body as of yore, but with a slight indication of care coming and going—flitting across her benevolent face like the light-fleckered clouds of summer across the morning sky—now here, now there, now gone, now back again—finally to melt away in a beauteous burst of sunshine. William is no longer a boy—a brave youth is he with wild dreams singing through his brain—a strange mingling of the student and rustic, the thoughtful brow contrasting with the bronzed cheek and sparkling eye. All those years, winters especially, has he been with the dear old pastor at the "high larnin'." And with such marvellous success that his teacher has had, time and again, to implore his father to send him away to college, or he would be driven crazy trying to keep ahead of his relentless pupil.

Harry and Mary! Ah, yes, Harry and Mary, we all want to hear about them. What changes have those

years wrought since their young hearts throbbed at the mere mention of William's proposal to teach them some of the grand things he had been telling them out of his books! To say that they had been diligent students, says little. They drank in—absorbed—all new ideas with an avidity bewildering to their enthusiastic teacher. It seemed almost as if Mary had not over-estimated the ability of her brother in this respect. But Mary herself! How shall we describe her? A rare exotic we have called her as a child. Now a rose—not a rose-bud, but a rose-bush exhaling exquisite fragrance. A *petite* mite of a thing is she yet, in sooth, standing dazed-like on the mystic boundary separating girlhood from womanhood. Fragile in figure is she, yet graceful as the wild roe that bounds across the hills, pure is she as the zephyrs that steal forth in the evening from the fingers of Him who holdeth the winds in His fist.

Poor Abijah! He has changed least of all. He did his "thinkin' an' 'athinkin'" years ago, and has simply been going over old ground since last we heard from him.

Mr. Fenwick has been getting nearer the kingdom, and now stands bowing on the borderland; bowing to the angels on the further shore, whose shadowy outlines with the eye of faith he can see; and as he bows he waits in patience for the call that bids him cross the stream. To the dismay of Deacon Farley, there has not been an average of six sermons on the mysteries for a year or more, while the Infinite compassion has over and over again been presented with melting fervor and subduing power.

Great events, we have said, have of late begun to loom up on the horizon of this little New Hampshire village among the hills—great shadows as yet, but every day becoming more palpable. Vague rumors floating in the

air from house to house and whispered around the blazing fires during the early part of the winter have at length taken to themselves definite shape and consistency. The old tales of the fathers, heard with open-mouthed wonder and kindling awe by listening childhood, of midnight attacks by prowling savages, and then the "moving incidents by flood and field" which followed—all these are now no more droned over to shivering groups clustering closer together as the tale grows darker and bloodier, and the hoarse shriek of the storm without seems like the whoop of the merciless red-skin. But now are heard stories of coming glory; for the whole country round about is aglow with excitement as flying rumors are becoming condensed into acknowledged facts that none dare question. The old traditional enemy, the French, are to be bearded in their stronghold by the sea. A New England army going forth to conquer Louisburg! Is it any wonder that the eyes of the old men glowed with memories of the olden time, as the coming conflict conned over in their hearing by the sanguine youth of the village, visions of other days rose up out of the grave of the past, and former battles were fought over and former foes again exterminated? A wild dream as we look at it, this dream of the fathers to capture such a stronghold! Raw recruits, whose hands know more of the hoe, the axe or the cod-line, pitted against solid masonry and trained battalions of France! Degenerate sons of noble sires are we? Scarcely that, but any way we eye askance the heroic daring, holding our breath waiting for what to us appears the inevitable outcome of such reckless temerity. In order to form anything like an intelligent conception of the desperate nature of the enterprise which had taken full possession of the people of New England at this time, the reader is respectfully solicited to

step back a few years to consider the causes which culminated in events so pregnant with the interests of our story.

The Island of Cape Breton, one hundred miles long and about nearly the same in width, lies peacefully slumbering in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, between the forty-fifth and forty-sixth degrees north latitude. It is separated from Nova Scotia proper by a narrow channel, only a few hundred yards wide. The geographical conformation of the island is in every sense peculiar—the great Bras d'Or Lake thrusting itself, so to speak, right up into its heart, thus dividing it into two irregularly unequal divisions. In common with other portions of the eastern shores of this northern continent, it is claimed that Cape Breton was visited early in the tenth century by the wild Norwegian rovers of the sea—those brave, adventurous voyagers of the middle ages. Of the truthfulness of this tradition nothing definite now can be advanced. Certainty alone becomes evident towards the latter part of the fifteenth century, when that bold navigator, John Cabot, whose name is imperishably connected with our continent, set out on his daring voyage across the Atlantic. A few years subsequently, somewhere about the year 1524, the island was claimed for France by one Giovanni Verazano, a Florentine in the pay of the French king. About twelve years later, an Englishman named Hare is said to have visited it, while the same year Jacques Cartier undoubtedly landed on its shores. There is still a faint tradition lingering among the people that the French built a fort on the island as early as the year 1540. An attempt was made at an English settlement in the year 1583, under Sir Humphrey Gilbert, but it failed in being a success. Another English-

man, a Capt. Strong, next appears on the scene somewhere about the year 1591, followed a little later by a Capt. Leigh, also an English officer. It is said that, so far back as the beginning of the seventeenth century, the fisheries on those coasts were so productive that over two hundred English vessels were engaged in their prosecution. Although the English thus early appear desirous of its possession, Cape Breton was claimed from the first by the French, and included in their American possessions. They named it Isle Royale, and Louisburg, its great stronghold, was so called in honor of their king. The fortifications of this town were begun in the year 1720. No more admirable a locality could have been decided upon on which to erect a powerful fortress. The town was built upon a small peninsula, with the commodious harbor on the inside, and the wild, roaring Atlantic dashing against the other. The fortifications commanded every possible approach by sea or land. It cannot, therefore, be a matter of surprise that, even in those early days, Louisburg soon rose to a position of commercial importance, and carried on a lucrative trade with old France, as well as with the French possessions in the West Indies. The original purpose of the French in building and fortifying Louisburg was, that as the island everywhere was thickly covered with forests, it could easily be held by this one fort against any possibility of attack. It was considered one of the impracticable things for an enemy to make a successful descent upon it by land. As a naval station, too, it was of vast importance so long as France held any possessions this side the sea. It was, therefore, the fixed policy of the home authorities that Louisburg should become not only a naval and military post, but if possible a commercial one. They succeeded in both. The means adopted to effect this latter object were in keeping with the spirit of the age. Every

vessel sailing from France was peremptorily required to bring out a certain number of emigrants. In order to establish a fixed population in the town, after their arrival the immigrants were under bonds not to leave till the expiration of three years. They were thus slaves in all but in name. The success of this plan may be inferred from the fact that, in 1745, Louisburg could boast of a population of over four thousand, exclusive of the military. The trade of the port was important. The fortifications were on so formidable a scale that, had they been completed previous to the siege, the position might be considered impregnable. The city, as it was called, was small, covering an area of only about one hundred acres. All the approaches by land, where it was possible for an attacking force to effect a foothold, were supposed to be effectually checked by the exceedingly marshy nature of the ground, while the heights overlooking the town and harbor could only be occupied after a long and dreary circuitous march through dense forests and interminable labyrinths of almost impenetrable undergrowth. Stretching across the entrance of the harbor were three small islets, the largest, named Battery Island, being strongly fortified, having about thirty heavy guns in position. Between this island and Lighthouse Point, on the mainland opposite, lies the channel, about six hundred yards in width. Directly facing the mouth of the harbor was the Grand Battery, whose guns swept the narrow channel, past Battery Island, clear out to the sea. This was a most formidable outwork, mounting thirty guns of heavy calibre, and was protected by a moat and bastions. The fortifications proper were grimly menacing. The front of the town is seen to be defended by a strongly constructed wall of solid masonry, pierced by five great gates leading to as many wharves. One hundred and forty-eight cannons glare

down upon the scene and out over the waters of the bay. The citadel, or as the garrison called it, the King's Bastion, is inside the walls, and contains apartments for the Governor and his officers. In it we find also an arsenal and a church. The town is laid out regularly—the streets running at right angles. On many sides are handsome buildings, prominent among which is a large and beautiful stone hospital—an imposing structure. Seen far out upon the heaving sea, it presents a striking appearance to the tempest-tossed mariner arriving from his beloved France. Some slight idea of the nature, extent, as well as strength of the place may be formed by the fact that up to this date five millions of dollars had been expended on the fortifications.

When war was declared between England and France in the year 1744, the attention of the home authorities was early directed to the advisability of reducing Louisburg. Successful marauding expeditions, sent out from this stronghold to prey upon the English settlements in Nova Scotia, were a matter of common occurrence. It was therefore strongly impressed upon the people of New England that so long as such a dangerous neighbor was entrenched at their doors, their own safety was constantly menaced. With an admirable harbor, accessible to their fast-sailing ships, privateers could be despatched at an hour's notice to pounce upon the unprotected English colonists along the coasts, and, when the work of destruction was done, retreat unharmed under cover of the guns of this giant fortress by the sea. It was such considerations as these that induced Judge Auchmuty, of the Vice-Admiralty Court of Massachusetts, not only to set forth the feasibility, but actually to advocate the reduction of Louisburg. To Governor Shirley, however, must be said to belong the undisputed honor of being the first to bring

the matter to the notice of the Legislature. The time appeared propitious. The fortifications, it was well known, were in an unfinished state—the garrison was said to be mutinous. The governor (Dusquesnel) had just died, and was succeeded by an acknowledged inferior in the person of Duchambon. In a despatch to the British Ministry, dated Nov. 10th, 1744, Gov. Shirley laid the whole question plainly before them, urging immediate and decisive action. The result of this appeal is that Commodore Warren, then stationed in the West Indies, is ordered to Boston to confer with Shirley. The Legislature of Massachusetts, however, deems the whole undertaking so absurdly Quixotic that they report adversely. But the governor is not to be put off. He has set his heart upon the enterprise, and, like all men of profound convictions, is not to be discouraged by trifles. Petitions, inspired by Shirley himself, pour in upon the Legislature in favor of the expedition, so that a reconsideration of the matter is had, resulting in a vote favorable to the project, but by only one of a majority. Shirley, having gained his point, is not the kind of man to lose precious time in thinking it over. And it is worthy of note just here, that when once the expedition is decided upon, all those who have been seeing nought but disaster and dismay, throw themselves heartily into the movement as they fling their fears to the winds. The old warlike spirit, we have seen, is aroused. Young and old vie with each other. The venerable sire, unable now to buckle on the sword, tells to throbbing hearts the deeds of the olden time. The bustle of preparation is in the air. And soon will be in the air another sound—Rachel crying for her children, and will not be comforted because they are not. No, will not be comforted because they are not!

CHAPTER XIII.

WILLIAM'S RASH DECISION.

WHEN it became definitely known in Woodside that a call for five hundred men had been made upon New Hampshire to accompany the expedition against Louisburg, the excitement, which for months had only been kept within bounds by uncertainty, now burst into a flame that spread to every home. From the first faint mootings of the coming struggle, William Farley was wild for the fray. His father said little one way or the other. As usual, he was looking for the path of duty. Mrs. Farley prayed. Her strongly affectionate heart, with the infallible instincts of a mother, began to be troubled. She could not tell why; for William had never intimated, by word at least, what had taken complete possession of his busy brain, keeping him awake night after night as he revelled in prospective scenes of glory. But the mother marked it all, although he tried hard to hide it from her. She noted with pain that the "high larnin'" was at a discount. Her boy appeared many times lost in thought. She noted, too, that he was oftener at the village than was his wont of an evening. He had suddenly changed from the wild, rollicking boy into the grave dignity of the man. William had not inherited his father's contented ambition. An obedient son had he been, as all Woodside could bear witness; for apart from his little difficulty with the doctrines, now all but forgotten by his father, he had never crossed his parents in anything. Yet he had longed for something for years—he knew not what. Now he knew. The opportunity had come. He saw it from the first;

but love for his mother drove it away only for it to come back with redoubled force. What was he to do? Pray? He had prayed. He prayed over it as he prayed over everything that troubled him, but he always rose from his knees with the conviction stronger than when he knelt down that he was going, and that it was his duty to go. If ever he came in his life very near to believing the decrees, it was during those seasons of heart-searching. Who will blame the ardent boy if more than once he regretted sorely that he had ever questioned the mysteries? How consoling he thought it would be for him now to look with mental eye along the line of the dead centuries and believe that, before "the heavens were brought forth," it had been decreed that he, William Farley, should be a soldier at Louisburg! But he lacked this consolation, and so would drive by desperate effort all thought of the expedition from his mind, plunging again into his books, only to find that he brought up where he had left off—he would go to Louisburg! Go he must, come what would of it. But his mother and Mary! Ah, to be sure, there it was, and of course it would never do to go. Certainly not. But the outcome of his cogitations was that he found himself profoundly convinced that it would do. Why not?

With such conflicting thoughts as these coursing through his brain, chasing each other with flying feet, rendering him unfit for either physical or mental work, he had one evening repaired to the village where now nightly congregated young and old to talk over the coming conflict. The die was cast! As he walked hurriedly along the path past Abijah's door on his way home, he knew the die was cast. He did not dare look at the house, as, holding his breath, he strode along with swinging step; for although it was late Mary knew

he was at the village and might be at the window watching for him, as she often was, and so he would have to stop and tell her. She was there, and saw him and knew all.

"Mother!"

"Why, William, you frightened me."

He had found her engaged in the mysteries—not his father's mysteries by any means, but the mysteries of some culinary black art or other, out in the back kitchen whither he had stolen tip-toe on entering the house and finding his father bolt upright in the straight-back chair, with closed eyes before the cheerful fire.

"Mother—I'm going."

"Goin' whar, William? What, for goodness sakes alive, does the child mean?"

"Well, I know just how it will be, and what you and father'll say; but—" and he paused, looking into the loving eyes of the fond woman before him—"but there is not a better boy to his mother in all Woodside, now is there, mother?" And the great fellow bent low over and kissed her till the tears gushed to her eyes. She knew all along what was coming.

"Mother, sit down here for a moment, will you? There. Now, don't you look so," and he kissed her again. "I'll tell you all about it in a minute. You're always working and working out here till you'll kill yourself. Leave it all till the morning, for you'll have to tell father, and right away too—the sooner the better."

He paused for a moment, his mother's eyes, still filled with tears, yet fixed on his face.

"Can't help it, mother—I can't indeed. I must go or go crazy, either one; but I do just hate myself all the same," and he stood as if uncertain how to proceed.

"But you know I'll have to tell you somehow," and

there was an unnatural huskiness in his voice. His mother rose and snuffed the candle with trembling fingers, and a great hand went dashing across his face when her back was turned. She sat down again, and again William commenced his story : —

"You see, I was down at the store and they're all going, and so I said I was going myself, and you know it would never do to back down after that. I said I would go too, and if I don't they'll say I'm afraid, and as for fear, well, I don't know if there's much of that about me one way or another. So, I'm going, mother."

"Whar be yew going, William?"

"Well, you see, they're to raise fifty men hereabouts, and there's well-nigh half of them promised already."

"Goin' t' th' woods 'praps?" queried the poor woman, as if she didn't comprehend only too well the meaning of his words.

"Well now, no, not just the woods, although there may be woods, and I believe there is woods down there ; going to the war, mother!"

"War!"

"Yes, you see I have done nothing for weeks but think about it. I have tried my best to get rid of it, but to no purpose. I'm going! You will have to tell father to-night, some way or other. I just hate myself, but it's no use ; I've got to go!"

Then he kissed her again, and crept silently to his room up stairs.

"Heaven forgive me, if I have done wrong!" he muttered to himself, as turning into bed he was soon wrapped in sleep, performing prodigies of valor all night in his dreams. He was struggling desperately with a big-bearded Frenchman, when he awoke to find it late in the morning, and his father standing by his bedside, with a hand on his shoulder.

"William!"

"Father!"

Each gazed at the other a moment in silence: "Your mother has told me that—" but he could get no farther.

William sprang out of bed and, hastily dressing, sat down in bewilderment, confused by his father's unnatural look and voice. Ever since the memorable discussion on the doctrines there never had been a moment's misunderstanding between them. True, the boy had been careful to give no cause for trouble. Now, for the first time since then, he had decided to act without having consulted his parents, and had made up his mind, come what would, to stand by the decision thus made.

"I am sorry, father," he at last began; "I'm sorry, father, but I'll be back again before you'll know I've been away, and then—just think of it, I'll——"

"William Fenwick!"

The youth started. He had never been so addressed in all his life; no, not even in the matter of the mysteries, and he started now not more at the strangeness of the name then at the strangeness of the voice which had spoken it.

"William Fenwick, you're named after a man of God, and I have tried to do what was right by you. You grieved my heart years ago, but I never thought you would again try to bring trouble on your mother and me. William Fenwick, you are not to leave home. I have spoken!"

He turned solemnly, and walked down stairs before the young man could well realize what had taken place. Could this be true, or was it merely a dream? Ay, sure enough, it might be a dream; and he rubbed his eyes and pinched his arms almost half convinced he was yet asleep.

"I'm awake, sure enough, that's clear. It's hard on father to have me go. Of course it is, but—I'll go all the same. No I wont, though: not with father against it. I could never do that; it would kill me to do that. What if he would die when I'm away—folks die. What!—I never thought of it before. What if I die myself! Be killed in battle. Strange I never thought of this before. But I'll—let me see—yes, I'll go all the same!"

He heard his mother's voice calling him at the foot of the stairs, and he went down to breakfast. It was a dull and dreary meal. William felt as if he had been guilty of some fearful crime for which it was his duty to atone at once. The parents were busy with their own thoughts. A glance at his mother's agonized face made William more than once resolve to give in and beg forgiveness then and there. Then another thought of Louisburg, and he would not do it. No, not he; he wouldn't do it.

The dreary meal was over, and the father taking down the Bible from its place on the mantel, began the never-omitted morning's devotions. William scanned the face with quick furtive glances, to see if there was any relenting now. How handsome his father looked, he thought. He was yet in the full vigor of a strong, muscular manhood. The lines on his high pale forehead smoothed away and out as he read. The face gradually softened as the solemn but cheering words touched his heart: "I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread!" What a prayer followed. The wrestling of a mighty man with his God. When it was over the father and son faced each other.

"Father!"

"William!"

And the tears would come, do what he would, into the

deacon's eyes. He turned away to hide his emotion. But it was enough. William knew that he was forgiven, and that the rest would be easy.

"Oh, infidel! great is thy faith," cries some one in utter amazement at the credulity of him who denying the supernatural because, forsooth, it is contrary to his reason, yet by his very unbelief is forced back to believe the most absurdly grotesque of impossibilities: "Oh, infidel! great is thy faith." Read over to this youth, with the hot blood surging through his brain, with the magnetic current tingling along every nerve—read over to him now, will you not, a chapter from some pagan like yourself, and as you read it let it soothe him! Read over to this stern father, will you not, some precious morsel from the Koran, or some exquisite tid-bit from the Shastas, and as you read mark how it melts his heart and draws him with the cords of love towards his boy! Thou fool: thou knowest thou hast nothing that will touch the father or will soothe the boy. Great indeed is thy faith!

CHAPTER XIV.

A MILITANT MINISTER.

A PLEASANT-SPOKEN man was the Rev. Donald McDonald, pastor of the church in the village of Harmony, twelve miles from Woodside. As his name indicates, he was a descendant of Old Scotia, his father having come out from Scotland and settled in the neighboring colony when Donald was but a child. The father was an honest, God-fearing man, like most of his countrymen. If narrow in his creed, he had at least that rare quality known in our

day as the courage of conviction. To him there was but one solid substratum of truth outside the Bible—the Westminster Catechism. That all things happened according to the unalterably eternal decrees as immutable as the laws of the Medes and the Persians, was not so much an article of his faith as it was faith crystallized. Whatever opinion he might have secretly entertained as to the probable relation borne by his neighbors to the decrees or the decrees to his neighbors, he never had the shadow of a doubt on his mind as to the relation existing between the decrees and himself, including, of course, his family. Unlike our good friend Deacon Farley, he never would let go of the promise—"To you and to your children." Of unflinching integrity, beneath the harsh exterior beat a heart that was intensely human. Its humanity manifested itself pre-eminently in his tender love for the little Donald. Little Donald was to be educated for the Church. The lad had, from a child, been remarkable for smartness. He was indeed a smart boy, and would have carried off the palm in this particular in days when the smart boy is not such a rarity. This smartness, it was true, in the opinion of the neighbors should have rather been called impudence; but then, let it be known, those neighbors were generally jealous-minded fathers and mothers who had no smart boys themselves. There were even whispers that Donald would never hesitate to improve on a story if thereby he could gain a point; but this again only arose from envy, as somehow or other the lad always managed to come out all right in the end. His comrades, whoever they happened to be, came out all wrong, carrying the shame and disgrace with whatever meekness they could muster as evil-doers. Donald always appeared on such occasions as a very badly-used boy, whose innocent, confiding nature had been cruelly taken advantage of by those

who had no innocent, confiding natures. Whatever scepticism might obtain among the neighbors on this head, with the father and mother it was part of the family creed, and the principal part of it at that, that Donald could do no wrong. Little Donald was a child of grace, bless you, included in the covenant from all eternity. Hence little Donald was always right! Ill-minded people there were who would whisper that the lad was smart enough always to appear right before his parents, while he was at no particular pains to appear so before the parents of other children; but then, ill-minded people there have always been since the world began, and, for that matter, always will be. When little Donald was old enough he was sent off by the proud father to college to be educated for the Church, not however without sundry shakings of heads and such-like manifestations of ill-mindedness on the part of his old acquaintances and neighbors. If rumors occasionally found their way back to his home that Donald was still the object of heartless conspiracies on the part of his fellow-students, such rumors never found their way to the loving father, who firmly believed that his son was a "chosen vessel" after the order of Saul of Tarsus. When the boy developed into the youth and the youth looked hard upon the man, the only change in his general deportment exhibited to his friends, as he returned from time to time to spend his vacation among them, was that his old misfortune still clung to him, dogged his footsteps, in fact, with relentless persecutions. Other youths and young men appeared inspired by some spirit foul and fell to deceive poor Donald in one way or another on every possible occasion, so as to impose upon his innocence. Before the young collegian got through his course he had become as smooth and oily-tongued a youth as could delight the

heart of any fond parent. The evil-disposed would, of course, whisper among themselves that all this was put on—feigned for a purpose—but to the simple-minded Scotchman it was only the logical outcome of "effectual calling and efficacious grace." Donald had been at last duly installed pastor of the church in Harmony, from which he had received "a regular gospel call," to use his proud father's phraseology, shortly after the completion of his studies. The parents soon after peacefully departed, one following the other closely into the silent land, having no further desire to live when they beheld in the ordination of their son the full fruition of their earthly hopes.

The Rev. Donald McDonald was, it has been said, a pleasant-spoken man. As a preacher, however, his old trouble followed him. Malicious souls there were who would say that the same evil genius that had haunted him in school and pursued him in college, dogged him even into the pulpit, going so far as to audaciously substitute other men's sermons for those the reverend dominie had laboriously worked out for himself in his study. But there were croakers in all ages of the world, even in apostolic times, and fault-finders everywhere, even in the Church! The rev. Donald took no note of these malicious reports when he heard them, but went on the even tenor of his way, preaching what came to hand with holy unction, asking no questions "for conscience' sake," as became a minister. But malice did not stop even here. Those same evil-disposed maligners went so far as boldly to whisper that the poor of the parish were not nearly so often visited by the pastor as the better-to-do class. But, here again, what was this but manifestations of the "natural man?"

The rev. Donald, it was also said, prided himself on his

knowledge of men; and how he manipulated the little flock in the matter of the fleece was a source of never-failing merriment when he unbended his mighty intellect in the bosom of a few choice spirits like himself. But all this, of course, was lies. When the expedition against Louisburg was finally decided upon, the rev. Donald naturally saw here (so they said) golden fields of prospective advantage to himself, financial and otherwise. As to the great principle involved he knew little, cared less. As to the advancement of his own selfish ends he cared considerably. He saw clearly enough the possibilities of the occasion, so far at least as he himself was personally concerned. The prospect of securing an army chaplaincy was something not to be lost sight of. Now, the rev. Donald added to his other excellent qualities that of arrant coward. The whole tenor of his life, from that of the innocent village boy, always the victim of heartless conspiracy at the hands of his playmates, down to these years of his pastorate over the village church, was characterized by cowardice. He would rebuke sin in the poor with stern and patriarchal severity. He would thunder denunciations against the errors of Rome; but it was quite another affair when the sinner happened to be the best paying supporter in the parish; it was quite another matter when error lay a little nearer home than in the "seven-hilled city" on the Tiber. But, coward as he was, he was a still greater hypocrite—a greater self-seeker; so that, early in the movement against Louisburg, he saw his opportunity and eagerly embraced it. His application for the chaplaincy was successful; and, forthwith, the rev. Donald began to develop the most wonderful martial qualities, to the great astonishment of sceptical young people generally who remembered several instances of poltroonery in which his reverence had played no insignificant part.

Among his other noble virtues, it was mooted that the rev. Donald, in the privacy of his own family, was the reverse of what he was in the privacy of other families. So much was this the subject of common report that when on a certain Sabbath he announced as his text, "Husbands, love your wives," a broad grin was seen on the faces of the sceptical few, while an unmistakable ripple passed over the congregation. It was no secret that Mrs. McDonald had a sorry time of it with her lord and master. Not that he had ever been known to have been guilty of any overt act of cruelty. He was too great a hypocrite for that; but in all the arts of studied contempt and neglect he was an adept. His choicest bows and holiest smiles were not for the meek-eyed, half-frightened-looking little woman who cared for the children and the house while the majestic Donald with reverend tread and solemn air perambulated the streets. Those were reserved to be dispensed with becoming lavishness on the wives and daughters of his more wealthy parishioners, upon whom he so frequently called in the conscientious discharge of his pastoral duties. So heavily lay upon the dear man's heart the responsibility which rested upon him to see after the spiritual welfare of this particular class of his flock, that if the weather at all permitted, the pompous form of the minister might be seen every morning emerging from the door of the parsonage, for a formal progress down the street. It was, therefore, with more than his wonted dignity, it may easily be imagined, he sallied forth the morning after he had received the satisfactory assurance that his application for the much-coveted chaplaincy had been favorably considered at headquarters. He had proceeded but a few rods from his dwelling (passing in oblivious indifference a poor settler from over the hills who was a regular attend-

ant at church but unable to contribute much to the stipend) when he saw approaching his bosom friend, because a wealthy farmer and senior deacon of the church.

"Good morning, reverend sir! Do we find you in health this morning, sir?"

"My health, deacon, has never been better, for which we gratefully acknowledge the goodness of One who sees the sparrows when they fall! How is your own health, deacon, and that of your most amiable family?"

"Tolerably fair, sir; tolerably fair; thank you kindly, sir, for asking. Is Mrs. McDonald and the children well?"

"Yes, well, thank you—ahem! Have you, by the way, deacon, may I ask—have you heard anything special from the seat of war? Ahem, that is to say, is our contingent yet made up?"

"I have heard, sir, that only a few more are needed, and that our boys may be ordered off at any moment!"

"Just so? I suppose that you are aware, deacon, that in the good providence of the Disposer of events, it has seemed unto Him meet and proper that my humble application should have been most favorably received—in a word, granted? You will therefore be aware, as a consequence, that in all human probability I will proceed with our troops to battle against the idolatrous Scarlet Lady of Rome?"

"I am pleased and sorry, reverend sir, to hear you say so. But how we are going to get on without you I cannot see. The house of the Lord will be as in the olden time, I fear, deserted!"

"Deacon," interrupted the minister; "deacon, it will be your solemn duty during my absence—in other words, during the absence of your unworthy servant, who goes up to the help of the Lord against the mighty—it will be your solemn duty, as senior deacon, to see to it that regu-

lar diets of worship are held. The public reading of the Word and prayer must not be neglected on the Sabbath day. I have moreover received a kindly answer from my fellow-watchman on Zion's walls stationed at Woodside. He promises to dispense the ordinances as occasion may require."

"I'll do my best, sir, you be sure; but my best is perfect weakness!"

"Of course, of course; 'no confidence in the flesh,' as Paul has it; that is quite proper, deacon, quite proper! But, to change the subject slightly, I was on my way to the smith's; did you notice if he was in the forge?"

"He was; he's busy at work there now, for I had a word with him as I came along!"

"Deacon, I am going to have an axe made to carry with me to Louisburg to hew down the images of Rome when we enter the idolatrous city," and, with the air of a man upon whose shoulders rested the whole weight and responsibility of the campaign, our militant minister strode majestically towards the forge, whence the sharp blows on the anvil soon smote upon his ear.

CHAPTER XV.

MY MARY!

"WHO loves, raves!" shrieks from deep depths the most cynical of poets, "Who loves, raves, 'tis youth's frenzy!" Of all men he was the least fitted to speak or sing of love. Who loves *not*, "raves." What is life but one long tragedy of which the little-winged god is hero? Love is coeval with life. The tiny infant in its cosy crib lifts up its chubby hands in love towards its mother's face. The

little fairy who climbs upon your knee, winding her arms around your neck, baptising with dewy lips your cheek, is born to love and lives by love. The birds sing to each other in orisons of love in the trees. The very flowers at your feet blush in love at you as you pass. The "garish sun" itself rejoices in the majesty of its love as it kisses our world with its life-giving breath. The moon's soft beams but speak of love. The stars twinkle their love from afar—they hail each other in love across the trackless sky. The soft breezes of the summer evening call us forth to love! What a horrible charnel-house, full of dead men's bones would be our world, were it not for love! "Who loves raves!" Then all rave—for all love!

What mysteries deep are hidden in the heart of yonder blushing girl, in silent reverie with downcast eye, walking along the beaten path from the village to her humble home on the hill. Scarce sixteen summers have passed over her young life, and so lightly have they touched her as they fled, that she is yet as a child. Away up here among the hills she has breathed the pure air of heaven—drunk freely from nature's pure fountain and read with brightening eye its page. The outside world is to her a blank this evening; for there is but one world for her now, and she lives in it—the world of love. A happy joyous little thing has she been of late till within a week or so; but a shadow has come down like an omen of evil on her heart, and as she walks along the path in pensive mood, she shudders as she thinks of it. "Oh, it cannot be—it must not be—I only dreamt it!"

"My Mary!"

William Farley had been following for some distance, having been down in the village as he always was those evenings, and had seen her pass. He had crept up stealthily behind her as she walked slowly towards

home, and had heard her sigh. How he loved his Mary! He had carried the little elf in his arms many a time since he had saved her from drowning. So many times, indeed, had he caught her up and went tearing across fields and through woods and over streams in their numberless expeditions and explorations that it was a long time before it occurred to him that she was no longer a child but almost a woman. But the revelation came at last. One never-to-be-forgotten afternoon during the last summer the three young people had climbed, as was their custom, to the summit of the hill overlooking the village. What a glorious evening it was! They thought they had never known the like of it. The sun was sinking in the west, tinging the sky with an aureola of color. The fleecy frescoing of clouds upon a field of blue was wrought out with all the exquisite perfection of nature's fantastic but artistic brush. The moon was high in the heavens waiting modestly for her turn to add beauty to the scene. The village lay at their feet, nestling close to the hillside. Seated upon a rock, resting from the exertion of the ascent, Mary's eyes alternated between sky and valley in wondering admiration.

"How beautiful! Look—look there, William!" and she raised her plump, white hand as she pointed to the georgously-tinted clouds: "Did you ever see anything like it? Isn't it beautiful?"

"Yes, it is beautiful!"

His voice startled her. There was a strange trill in it she had never heard before. She turned round to where he had thrown himself carelessly on the grass a few yards off. Harry had wandered away somewhere over the brow of the hill. Their eyes met.

"Yes, it is beautiful; but I know something more beautiful still!"

"What in the world can it be?" she asked still looking coyly at him.

"Yourself, Mary."

"Oh, William!"

"My Mary!"

The moon had got its turn to shine, and had shone away till it had got ashamed of itself at all it was seeing before the young couple parted that night at Abijah's door. It shone in, too, upon a sweet upturned face at the little window in Mary's chamber long after the parting at the door. It is shining upon them now as, after spending the evening together, he lingers on the doorstep.

"My Mary!"

He had never addressed her in any other way since he had first used the sweet words that summer afternoon upon the hill-top. What a charm there is in the name! There is a deep pathos in it that thrills the heart. We never hear it but we think of Jesus in the home of Martha and her sister; our thoughts fly away to the resurrection morn. The endearing salutation and its adoring reply is in our ears:

"Mary!"

"Rabboni!"

They stood on the doorstep. "My Mary! Don't take it so much to heart! I will be back again before you know I am away!"

"Oh, William, how can I ever live without you?"

"See you," he replied with animation. "See you; mother and you can be together often. You must comfort her. She feels so cast-down about my going. So does father. He was a long time before he could see the path of duty. He sees it now, and submits—foreordained from all eternity, or something after that fashion, you know," —and the young man looked roguishly down at the little

girl at his side. They had stood here too long already. The night air was chilling. The moon veiled its smiling face behind a passing cloud as the youth ceased speaking. The stars tell no tales, and William was off and away before the cloudlet was gone.

When Mary re-entered the house and passed out to the kitchen, she found her father and brother in deep consultation. Something in their manner told her that a new trouble was coming—what, she dared not think, she could not think.

"Mary, me child," said the father, "come heer a bit, an' sit deown ; Harry an' me hev ben atalkin' on it over, an' we both 'low it must be dun !"

Trembling with feelings of mingled fear and hope the young girl sank into a chair, unconsciously throwing aside her shawl.

"Mary, me child," spoke the father as she sat down, "it'll be ez great a trial t' me ez t' yew, but t' let William go alone, arter what's happened, wouldn't dew. Harry's goin' tew !"

"Oh, father ! Hal—both to leave me ! God pity and help me !" and giving way to a wild, passionate burst of grief, she staggered up-stairs to her room, throwing herself upon the bed, crying as if her heart must break Harry softly followed and, creeping up close to the bedside, fell upon his knees and began gently to stroke the mass of golden curls that had fallen in disorder upon her shoulders. For a time he did not speak. Mary lay upon her face, quivering like a wounded bird.

"My dearest little sister," at length he began, "don't cry so ! I did it for your sake alone. Father and I have talked it all over several times, and we think it is the best that can be done since that man—Oh, dear, I can't bear to mention the name. But, darling Mary, you know how I

love you, how we all love you! To let William go alone now would be madness!"

"Oh, Hal,—I——" but she broke into a wild sob.

"There now, pet, don't. You must cheer up and I wil look after William, and bring him back again to you!"

"Harry! Oh, it is so hard. What shall I do?"

"Don't, darling; if you love me, don't. There now, my little one; do stop, and let us talk about it!"

"Oh, Hal, I would do anything for you I could; but—to think of losing you both, I——"

"But, dear, you don't lose us. Why do you say, lose us? We will be back before the summer is over, perhaps in a few weeks."

"But, Hal, what—if—you—should—be—killed? What—if—William——," she shuddered in convulsive sobs.

"What if I should get killed! What if William should be killed! What, indeed?" Why, he had never thought of this. "What if I should be killed?" Getting killed had never entered into his calculations. It was a revelation to him even to think of it. He knew little about the world. He knew nothing of what was involved in the life of a soldier. He had heard that soldiers sometimes were killed, that was all. "What if I should be killed. What if I should never see little Mary again?" The thought staggered him. He rose from his knees and crossed to the window. He gazed out over the fields where large patches of snow yet remained sparkling in the moonlight. It was almost as clear as day. Down there, right over the hillside before him, was the brook where Mary had fallen when a child, and where they had so often played afterwards with William in the cool summer evenings. Here and there he could catch glimpses of the dark water as it leaped and danced through openings in its icy fetters. Yonder was the old bridge on which they had

so often stood and looked down at the shy trout that used to dodge in and out under the logs, hiding from them. Memory with busy fingers was weaving round his heart its magic web. "What if I should be killed, and never see her again!" The thought pierced him. "Be killed and die, and be buried away from Mary!" He loved her so. He had never crossed her in anything. Her word was to him law; and he was going away from her—perchance to be killed. People got killed, soldiers especially. People died, and death was so sad: a funeral, how gloomy. There had been a funeral here, even from their own home. The tender mother had been carried away, and he remembered well the fearful pang, the desolation that had come down on them all, though he was but a child. "What if I should be killed!" The wind shook the sash in his face with a passing gust. A shudder ran through him, as the words of his heart seemed to be borne on the gale, as it went tearing away adown over the hill and up toward William's home, shrieking: "What if you should be killed —what if you should be killed!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE WARNING.

THE company to be raised in Woodside, and to which our two young friends had connected themselves, very soon had the required number of men. So many stalwart youths of the village and neighboring locality were longing to seek "the bubble reputation at the cannon's mouth," that it was no easy matter who should be chosen and who should be left. First come, first served, appeared to be the motto which guided the gallant captain

who was honored with the command of the Woodside volunteers. No better selection could have been made; for in the opinion of all, no braver man than Captain Allen ever buckled on a sword. A widower, only a little past thirty years of age, without children, and the owner of the snuggest farm in all the country round about, he was looked upon with no end of envious eyes by the fond mothers of Woodside whose daughters were of marriageable age. He had attended the minister's school as a youth, and consequently was polished of speech and rather well read, considering his surroundings. Of late he had been lavishing his attentions rather indiscriminately among the rustic belles of his acquaintances; and so impartially had he conducted himself in this particular, that no one could make make out with any degree of certainty who was the favored one. He was a handsome man in perfect health, and were it not for an undefinable expression about his mouth bordering on the sinister, he would have been irresistibly captivating. A brave man though, brave as a lion. True, he had never seen service, and knew nothing of the art of war, but what of that? With a heart as true as gold, said his confiding men, woe to the big-bearded "monseer" with whom he would cross swords. The captain had interposed serious objections to Harry's enlisting on the score of youth, he had said, but his objections gave way before the united pleadings of the minister and the young women, who knew the lad went for his sister's sake.

The company met daily for drill as they waited in hourly expectation for the order to join their comrades in the long talked-of march to the sea. The winter had passed away rapidly and the first breath of approaching spring was in the air. The men had been so busy with their drill that they had taken no note of the flight of

time. It is true, Captain Allen and his officers knew no more of military matters than the privates; but they all made up in ardor and enthusiasm what they lacked in skill. The excitement grew as the days fled on with lightning speed and neared the time when the brave fellows must go. The topic of conversation on every lip was the war. Men, women and children vied with each other as to what they could do for the comfort of the company. The steady tramp, as they marched through the quiet streets of the village, was the signal for a general exodus of the population towards the open field in the rear of the Meeting-house, which had been transformed into a drill ground. It was a pretty sight. No gay uniforms as yet added attraction to the men, the brave lads wearing their ordinary garments on such occasions; but no need had they for the gaudy ornamentation of military toggery to add to the wondering admiration of their friends. The excitement of the last few days was at last brought to a climax one fine afternoon as Capt. Allen, having exhausted his military knowledge manœuvring his men, called out in stentorian tones—

"Eyes front! Attention!"

Pausing, as if to gather his thoughts, and looking proudly conscious of his position, he at length proceeded to address the men, informing them of what, like a true soldier, he had all through the day kept to himself, viz., that he had that morning received a dispatch from Col. Moore, commanding him to repair as soon as possible with his men to Harmony, in order to join the troops who were to rendezvous at that village preparatory to their march for the sea-board. He knew it was not necessary to give them earlier notice, for he was well aware that they were all ready, and had been ready for weeks. Addressing a few words to the crowd of civilians

who clustered in groups around him, he thanked them on behalf of his company for their past kindness, concluding by asking for their prayers for the success of the expedition. He hoped, he said, to dismiss his men to their peaceful occupations in this very same field when victorious they returned from the war. Then the ranks broke silently —their feelings were too intense for a cheer—to rally again in the morning at daybreak prepared for the march.

"God bless yew, me boy!" sobbed his mother, as William dashed towards the spot where she was standing along with Mary and her father, listening to the cheering words of their pastor. Leaning on his staff, Mr. Fenwick had been eagerly watching the movements of the men with more than usual interest, for the captain had revealed to him the contents of the colonel's letter.

"God bless me boy!"

William could not reply. He tried to speak, but the sound of his voice was so harsh and unnatural that he stopped.

Mary clung to her father, while her dearest Hal, bounding towards them, began unconsciously stroking, as was his way, the long golden curls through which he had so often run his fingers as a boy. A minute or two of supreme silence and sobs, then the sound of a cheery voice:

"Come, my children, come! Let us to our homes. Time is precious, and there is much to be done before morning," and, so speaking, the aged minister moved on towards the street, followed solemnly by the others. The field had already been deserted by all save themselves. It may have been an accident. Perhaps it was not; but as they approached the gateway by which they were to gain the street, Mary, who was ahead with

her father and Mr. Fenwick, halted to let them pass through. The movement brought William by her side. He grasped her hand, and, bending low, whispered the old words—"My Mary!" She made no response, and they walked on together, hand in hand, out into the street and on after the others. Neither spoke. William knew that he dared not say more than he had or he would break down. His young heart was full to overflowing. A word might unman him, and his love and pride forbade him doing anything that might add to the grief of his darling.

Have you ever thought, gentle reader, have you ever thought of the mystery of a great trial? The little cares and worries of life tantalize us at times almost beyond endurance. We give way to petulant complainings and useless repinings. Trifles transient as the morning cloud, or as the early dew, worry us. But when there comes the heavy hand, the hand invisible, that pierces the heart with the cold iron of a mighty sorrow, we are dumb. Nature has no voice for the soul's deep agony; we are dumb. Perchance it is the inscrutable wisdom of Him who doeth all things well that permits the feelings to bubble, ferment and seethe over what after all may be but imaginary wrongs, thereby exhausting the outlet of emotion, so that when the hour of darkness comes down upon us we can do naught but bow submissively and are dumb. In very shame we feel the exhibition of anything similar to what was evoked by trifles would now be sacrilege, and we are dumb. The heart bleeds itself away in silence, giving no sound.

Arriving at the deacon's the two families enter, accompanied by their dearest earthly friend, Mr. Fenwick.

"My children," he immediately began as they took their seats; "my children, there are others to whom I

must speak before the morning breaks; but I know that you need me most now. Deacon Farley, this is the hand of God! Your son goes forth in a righteous cause. Submit to Him who overruleth all things for good."

"His will be done, sir; His will be done," exclaimed the deacon in a broken voice. "I have come to look upon it as of His ordering!"

The young couple were sitting side by side. Rising and advancing to where they sat, the aged minister placed a hand upon the head of each, saying as he did so, with a voice full of tears: "The Lord bless you, my children! May He make His face to shine upon you. May He be to you both a comfort when you are separated the one from the other. William, my brave boy, put your trust in One who is the God of battles, One who holds the winds in His fist and the waves in the hollow of His hand. When you return may it be in strength and triumph. Now let us lift our hearts to Him in prayer!"

The company rose to their feet in reverence before their Maker, while the holy man poured out his soul in their behalf. It was such a prayer as only such a man could make—tender, reverent, overflowing with love. There was not a dry eye in the room. When all was over it was felt that the tension was gone, and that they now could talk as before. A few more words of cheer, a parting benediction, and the old pastor was away, gone to repeat in many a home that night the same holy offices of comfort and consolation—pouring upon the troubled waters of other souls "the oil of joy for mourning."

"Father," and William advanced to his side. "Father, I know this is hard for you all. I do know now that I did wrong to take this step without first consulting you: but I know that you have forgiven me long ago, and I need not ask your forgiveness again."

"The good Lord be with you, my lad: it is all for the best—all for the best. It is His doings. I dare not murmur at what He does. I have meditated upon it long and prayerfully, and have found the path of duty. It is the will of God—foreordained from all eternity."

William wasn't so sure of that, but he wished from his heart it was. Harry had moved close to his sister, and was gently stroking her hair.

"I'll look after him, darling, for his own sake, but above all for yours," he whispered, "I'll never leave him. Trust me, Mary."

The sad eyes brightened for a moment, then the floodgates were opened again.

"Don't, Mary, don't for his sake and for mine," pleaded her brother; "there."

With a desperate effort she composed herself, as Mrs. Farley at last, mustering strength for the occasion, with all her native energy exclaimed:

"Come, let's t' work, there's much t' be done, an' its growin' dark. Come, Mary, with me, we must get supper an' then be up an' be doin'."

Glad of any excuse to get away, Mary followed out into the back kitchen.

"Harry, we'd better be agoin' neow," said Abijah, when the women had left.

"Not without supper," exclaimed the deacon, "not without supper. I'll not hear to it."

"Deekin, we must be agoin', neow. Come, Harry."

Farley knew his eccentric neighbor too well to argue the point further, nor did he feel like it, so with as cheerful a "good night" as he could muster, he let the father and son go home. When Mrs. Farley came in to spread the table she was not much surprised at finding the two missing; it was just like what Abijah might be expected

to do under the circumstances. It was a dull meal, do what they could to brighten it. Mary sat with downcast eyes making a pretence of eating, while William, after trying in vain to be calm and speak naturally, finally relapsed into silence. The father and mother said nothing—each fearing to speak. The simple repast over, Mary prepared to depart, while William, taking down his hat from its peg, stood ready to accompany her.

"I'll be back, mother, shortly," he remarked, almost like himself again, as she followed them to the door.

Mary had stepped outside and William yet held the latch with his hand. The mother whispered in his ear:

"Cheer her up a bit, dear; she's nigh broken-hearted, poor thing."

The door closed and the two were alone in the night.

"My Mary!"

"Oh, William, William!"

A long, endearing embrace and they went on.

"My Mary: we will be back in a month, perhaps less, and then and then,—we will be together for life."

"William, I feel so strange. I know something is going to happen—what, I dare not think."

"Don't, dearest one! You must not talk so; nothing is going to happen. I'll——"

"William!" She interrupted him with such suddenness, and with so unearthly a voice, that both stood still in the darkness trying to gaze into the other's face. The sky was over cast and the wind howled mournfully around them.

"William!" she spoke after a moment, "I have something to tell you! Oh, William!" and she clung hysterically to him, casting wild glances into the night, "Didn't you hear something?"

"My—my Mary! Nonsense, the wind down by the brook in the trees—nothing else in the world!"

"No! Come on, let us walk faster. Come quick, will you? I'm afraid! Oh, dear, what shall I do!" They walked on briskly a few rods, neither speaking. It was not just the kind of parting William had expected, not the kind he would wish had he the choosing of it. Something in the girl's conduct was so inexplicable. What could it mean? Was her mind giving away? and a pang shot through him as he felt he was responsible for it all. They soon reached her home. There was no loitering under the beech-tree or at the door this time. They went in. They found the father and son busy at work making preparations for the morrow. Mary passed them without a word into the inner room, her lover deliberately following.

"William!" as soon as they were seated; "William, I have something to tell you. You must promise me, though, not to ask questions. Will you, William; will you promise me?" and she threw herself on her knees beside him and grasped his hands in hers. Drawing the weeping girl tenderly towards him, and not knowing what to say or how to act, amazed at the strangeness of her tone and action, he managed at last to reply: "I will promise you anything under the sun, my Mary! I'll do whatever you ask!"

"There is some one going that—" a heavy gust of wind swept up from the meadow, shaking the windows with a rattling sound. "What's that? Didn't you hear some one at the window?" and she struggled from his arms and made for the kitchen.

"Come back, darling—my Mary, come back! Come here, dear; you are so frightened to-night. It was but the wind. Come, dearest," and he drew her fondly towards him.

"It sounded like some one trying to raise the sash. You're sure it was the wind?"

"Yes, sure, darling; nothing but the wind. Now tell me what you were going to say."

She looked around at the windows with nervous glances, and then, drawing his head down close towards her, whispered in his ear.

"My Mary! I haven't an enemy in the world. Who can——"

"Your promise, William; your promise. No questions. I warn you, I dare not say more, there is some one going that means you harm—*means you harm!*"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DEPARTURE.

THERE was little sleep in Woodside that night. In every cottage window gleamed the light through the darkness. Nimble fingers were busy putting the finishing touches to some labor of love. Longing eyes looked into longing eyes. Hearts knit together by the endearing bands of long years of wedded life, throbbed at the prospect of a separation which might be forever. Young, jubilant lads and lassies even were subdued beneath the deep solemnity of the hour. A night that in after years would be spoken of in low tones and trembling whispers was upon them, and was fast ebbing into day.

The home of the Farleys was one of supreme sadness. Alone by themselves, after the departure of the young folks, the father and mother gave vent to an uncontrollable outburst of grief. They had borne up for the sake of their loved ones; now that they were gone, both gave way to their feelings.

"Oh, it's hard ; it's so hard tew part with him, so hard," and the mother sobbed in a paroxysm of grief, as she swayed to and fro in her seat.

The father answered not. With bowed head, his arms resting upon the back of a chair, the tears fell like raindrops. Strange sight ! The strong, stern man was bowed at last, "a reed shaken in the wind." Their home had been so happy till now. The little difficulty about the doctrines, what was it ? The deacon was ashamed to think of it now. No sorrow had darkened their home. "The shadow of death" had never entered here. Twenty years or more of happiness had been theirs since, in the blush of their youth, they commenced life together. Their boy had been the light of their eyes, the joy of their hearts. How could they ever live without him ? Why it was but as yesterday they had tossed him, the one to the other, as the chubby little fellow screamed and laughed with glee : and now—he is going away from them, perhaps never to return. The thought pierced the deacon's heart afresh, like a barbed arrow, till he shook convulsively in his chair. Then the mother sobbed aloud, and they both wept together like children. When he had shed tears before, Farley could not remember. No, not even when he had laid his dear father in the grave. The firm conviction that all this present trouble was ordered by God from all eternity would not keep back the tears.

"Hush ! hush, he's acomin'."

It was the mother who spoke. With true womanly instinct, her quick ear detected the well-known footsteps long before the father. "Hush ! let's not dishearten him !"

It was with a great effort that the strong man recovered himself, and appeared comparatively calm as William entered. It was evident to the three that each had now a

part to act, and it was equally evident that each read the other's thoughts. William was composed to an unnatural degree, even going so far as to indulge in one of his innocent jokes at the expense of his mother's vernacular. It sounded sadly enough, it was true ; but she eagerly caught at it, and thus with cheery words the preparations for the morrow went on. It had been decided that the company were to march to Harmony, while their baggage was to be conveyed thither by teams kindly furnished by the neighboring farmers. William looked, with a smile lighting up his handsome face, as his eyes fell on the well-filled chest on the kitchen floor.

" Why, mother, you have pies enough here for a whole regiment. Who is ever going to eat all these, I would like to know ?"

"Doan't know 'bout that. I hain't put wan to menny in !" she replied with constrained and unnatural gaiety, as emerging from her bedroom, with an armful of shirts, stockings and underclothes, she commenced vigorously tucking them away in a corner of the chest.

William looked on in silent amusement. " Mother, why you must think I am going to be an officer before I get back. See what she's got here, father," and he stooped down and picked up his best Sunday coat. " It is of no use, mother dear, I'll never want it. We'll have uniforms, you know, so the captain tells us," and he insisted that the coat shouldn't go.

" Well, well, dear, ef I'd aknown that, I wouldn't put it in ; ef yew doant want tew take it, yew needn't. I'm not a sojer, yew know," and she bent down low over the box, and went on with her packing. William hurriedly crossed the room to the window, and pretended to be looking for something. He *was* looking for something. He was looking for power over himself ; for mastery over his

feelings, for had he not caught sight of the great tears dropping one by one from his mother's face into the chest? He returned, however, in a moment, and was about to address some remark to the father when the rumbling of wheels up the hill caught his ear.

"Here is the waggon already, mother. They are going to start long before us, you know, the roads are so bad. There is snow in many places yet, they tell me; so they are going to get a good start of us."

"William!"

"What, mother?"

"Look! Heer's me own Bible; yew'll read it, woan't yew, William dear, every day?"

"Why should you ask me, mother? To be sure I will, every day. You know it without asking."

"Yes, dear, I know'd it; but I thort I'd kinder like t' heer yew say it all th' same."

She put the little book fondly and carefully in a corner of the chest by itself, and then the lid was closed, the key turned, and she sat down upon the box to recover her breath. The father, aroused by his wife's reference to the Bible, had got up to get the Catechism, but, changing his mind, sat down again. They heard the voices of the teamsters at the door. The agonizing look on his mother's face was too much for the lad: he bent low and kissed her, while the tears flowed in torrents. It was all over in an instant, for as the door opened he was able to turn composedly toward the good-natured fellows that stood awkwardly on the threshold. They knew by the sad experience of the night that there were sore hearts here as well as elsewhere. The big box was shouldered and carried out. The creaking of the wheels down the hill towards Abijah's told that they were gone.

"William, dear, woan't yew sleep a little bit. It'll

make yew strong agen. That's more'n yew be neow, I'm afeard."

"Oh, no, mother, it's no use in my trying. I couldn't sleep if I tried ; but you could and should."

He stretched himself, however, on the old settee by the fire, where he had so often laid pondering the "high larnin'." Somehow or other, he knew not how it could have come about, but Mary came in and got down on her knees beside him. How she got there he couldn't for the life of him tell, for he hadn't heard the door open, or his mother speak to her. But there she was, sure enough, and after a while he came to think it the most natural thing in the world that she should be there. Where else should she be but there? To be sure, where else? And he was just about to clasp her in his arms, when he heard an awful whisper in his ear: "Some one is going that means you harm, William; that means you harm!" Springing up, he found to his amazement that he had been asleep, and his mother had just spoken to him.

"I hated t' dew it, William," she whispered softly, "but th' sky's gettin' bright. I've jest ben tew th' door alookin', an' I know'd yew wud like t' be amovin'."

"Oh, mother, I never once thought of going to sleep. I'm ashamed of myself, and this the last night too, and you alone here by youself. Where's father?"

"Heer he is acomin'," she replied as footsteps were heard outside. "He's ben deown to'ards 'Bijah's seein' ef eny wan's abeout."

The father at this entered saying that he thought he could hear the boys stirring in the village, but he wasn't sure.

They sat down to breakfast, which the fond woman had silently prepared on tiptoe, fearing to wake her sleeping boy. Then the never-forgotten prayers. But as the words were sticking in the deacon's throat, and he could find no

voice for his thoughts, the sharp, piercing blast of the trumpet (the only one in the whole country round about, and highly prized by the company in consequence) was heard wailing forth its pleading call on the morning air. A few minutes later and the three were on the road for the village. Abijah's house was dark and silent as they passed, showing they were already off. Arriving at the drill-ground the Farleys found nearly the whole community present. The volunteers were standing around singly or in groups, their loved ones clinging to them. It was now quite clear, and William's quick eye swept from group to group for his Mary. He soon saw her with her father and Harry, all by themselves.

"My Mary!" and regardless of curious eyes, he clasped her in his arms.

"Let me go, for Heaven's sake!" she gasped, "for Heaven's sake and your own!"

He released her in amazement.

"Fall in! Fall in, boys!"

It was the sonorous voice of Capt. Allen.

Taking advantage of the general movement and confusion which followed, William clasped her again in a last farewell, hearing as he sprang away to his father and mother: "Some one is going that means you harm, William—*that means you harm!*"

"The Lord bless me boy," sobbed his mother clinging to him. The father held him in his arms. Then, as he tore away and dashed into the ranks, with a smothered cry the mother swayed backwards and fell senseless to the ground.

"Right face—march!" and the steady tramp of the men filing past aroused her in time to see her darling wave his hand in a last adieu.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEW ACQUAINTANCES.

The Rev. Donald McDonald had his hatchet duly made to order at the forge to hew down the images of Rome in the papal city of Louisburg.* It had been sent home to the parsonage by the hands of the smith's apprentice, one Ned Gilchrist, a great lumbering good-natured fellow, but full of no small share of native wit and drollery. Ned was not going to the war. Not he. It was his opinion that there was war enough at home every day of the week, and that folks should stay where they were and fight their own battles. Let soldiers whose trade it was to kill and be killed look after Louisburg if it needed looking after. It was his opinion that it didn't need looking after at all. He had never been half a dozen miles from his native village in all his life, and now when an opportunity was afforded the young men round about to see the world, Ned pre‍sistently resolved to stick to the anvil. He didn't "want'r see no world," he would sententiously remark to the loungers in the forge as he rested for a moment from slinging the great sledge for his master. Then after a few more terrific blows on the red-hot iron that would have killed an elephant, he would add: "For ye see I'd a heap sooner live here abeout an' never see nothin' nor t' go ter Looisburg and see lots, then be killed soon'er 'n wink."

No one insinuated to the six-foot apprentice that he

* It is an historical fact that one of the chaplains of the New England army carried a hatchet to Louisburg to cut down the images in the churches.

was afraid of the French. Every one who knew him knew better than to say that. The party who would say it might give up hopes of Louisburg. Ned was a regular attendant on the ministrations of the Rev. Donald McDonald; but it was no secret to any that the young son of Vulcan was an out-and-out sceptic on the question of the minister's bravery. He couldn't see what business ministers had running off to wars. He knew there was one minister (he would mention no names) who shied off to the opposite side of the street when his rheumatic old cow shook her horns on the other side of the fence. Out of respect to the cow? O certainly, what else but out of respect to the cow. Not a doubt of it. Ned's scepticism developed into open ridicule in the matter of the hatchet. "The ijee," he would say to the young men who dropped in frequently to talk of the war, "the ijee: a goin' to chop deown them thar imajess in Looisburg!" and he would pick up the little weapon with such a ludicrous leer on his smoke-begrimed face, that a general roar invariably followed. In the presence of his master, however, he had to be careful about expressing opinions as to the minister's warlike propensities. "Mak it sharp, master," he would say, with a wink at the boys, as ever and anon a finishing touch would be given to the hatchet; "mak it sharp, mebbe them thar imajess will be tuff choppin'."

When the axe was finished, Ned, as has been said, carried it to the parsonage. His indignation almost betrayed itself before he got well out the hearing of the smith. "See a heer, boys," he shouted, holding it up to view as he strode along the street; "woe ter Babby-lun neow, shure 'nuff!" quoting the text of the rev. Donald's last sermon with a most ludicrous imitation of the minister's solemn tones. Then the ridiculous fellow would

make ferocious passes in the air at imaginary images, while the boys shook with laughter. Arriving at the parsonage he was met at the door by the redoubtable dominie himself.

"Well, Ned, my man, got the hatchet, I see. Have you made it sharp and of good metal to be used against the mighty?"

"It's th' best o' steel, sir, an' I'll risk th' aig bein' turned by them thar imajess!"

"They are abominations, my son, abominations; and they will be hewn down in the name of the Lord—they will be brought low!"

"Jest so, sir; jest so!" and, making his obeisance, the apprentice abruptly walked off, leaving his reverence in the midst of fresh denunciations of the Scarlet Lady.

"I dee-clar, it's jest tew bad! I spose I must be wan o' them thar we heer abeout so much on th' Sunday; given over tew a repperbate hart, or sum sech wurds. I dew b'lieve tho' he'd a heap sooner use th' ax on his poor wife. Yes, quicker'n he'll ever use it on them thar imajess," and Ned strode off home to his dinner, his blackened face lighted up with the most comical of smiles.

"Hal-lo-ah! What'n th' world's that?" as a blaring noise came up the street from far down the road. "More sojers, shure's you're born! Heer they be," and, forgetting his dinner, he ran off with tremendous bounds and warlike whoops after the crowds that came pouring out of their homes at the sound of the trumpet. It proved to be Capt. Allen's company from Woodside. They were quickly surrounded on all sides as they marched up the street.

"I dew dee-clar!" muttered Ned to himself in disgust as the men were halted in front of the parsonage and the

minister appeared with the hatchet conspicuously paraded. Shaking hands with the captain and speaking a few words in an undertone, to which the officer nodded assent, the rev. Donald straightened himself up as became a soldier, and, with a most solemnly impressive voice, addressed the company:

"Fellow-soldiers! I welcome you to this village of Harmony. Its name indicates the character of its inhabitants. 'Behold,' I may say without irreverence, 'behold, how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in *harmony!*' You will find it so. Our people are waiting to receive you. We go forth to glorious war. We go forth against Babylon, the mother of harlots! In the hour of victory you will see these mine hands"—here the hatchet was slowly raised in the air high above his head—"you will see these mine hands smiting down the images of idolatrous Rome!"

"Doan't ye b'lieve wan wurd of it, boys," muttered Ned to the soldiers near him; "doan't ye b'lieve wan wurd of it. Them thar imajess'll be safe 'nuff ef he's got t' hev th' hewin' on 'em!"

The company now broke ranks, and the tired men were soon surrounded by the eager crowd, each one of which vied with his neighbor in trying to carry off as many as possible to dinner. William and Harry fell to the lot of the smith, and, as they trudged along down the street, were pounced upon by Ned. Harry dropped behind, somewhat amused at the strange grimaces of the apprentice.

"I helped mak yon hatchet yew heerd on. It's th' cleer grit, that is—th' hatchet, I mean, not th' minister. Look eout for them thar ijols o' Rome!" he whispered in a low tone not to be overheard by his master.

"What hatchet?" asked Harry curiously.

"What hatchet? Why, didn't yew see th' minister

an' heer him? He's goin' to Looisberg t' chop deown them thar imajess o' Rome," and the begrimed face took on so comical a look that Harry burst into a roar of laughter.

"Up t' yer tricks a'reddy, Ned," cried the smith turning round. "Doan't yew be amindin' on him, my man—doan't be amindin' on him!"

"No, doan't yew be amindin' on th' minister either," replied the apprentice, but low enough only to be heard by his companion, and he gave Harry a nudge in the ribs; "he's a strong wan on them thar imajess, is the minister!"

They had by this time reached the smith's house, and were soon all seated round the table. The two young soldiers were hungry enough after their early breakfast and wretched tramp over the most abominable of roads, in many places slush and mud to their ankles.

"An' so yer off t' the wars, me lads?" said the smith's kind wife, as she replenished both their plates.

"War," suggested the apprentice; "war. There's only wan ez I've heerd on!"

A look from his master, however, caused him to relapse into silence during the remainder of the meal.

"Th' Lord be good tew ye, boys," continued the woman; "th' Lord be good tew ye. Ye'll hev wan tew comfort ye, howsumever—our minister's goin' tew!"

Ned turned on his seat, but said nothing.

"Yez," put in her husband; "yez, ye'll hev him tew remind ye of yer jooty!"

Ned moved uneasily.

"I've med him an ax tew hew deown them thar ijols o' Rome," continued the smith.

"Yez," chimed in his wife, "an' day afore yesterday when I was eout seein' the poor widder I met him on th'

street, an' sez he, is it reddy? Is what reddy, sir? sez I. The ax, sez he. I doan't know, sez I. Tell yer husband tew mak' it o' good cuttin' qualities, an', sez he, I'll bring home sum o' th' pieces. What pieces? sez I. What pieces? sez he. Why, pieces o' them thar imajess, so ez t' show th' 'bominations o' Rome, or sum sech high-flowin' wurds."

This was too much for Ned, who darted for the street, the door closing behind him with a bang. "Niver mind him, boys; niver mind him, he's queer!" apologized the woman. Refusing her kind offer to rest and sleep after their long march, the two youths after dinner strolled out to see the village. They had not proceeded far till they met their captain walking arm-in-arm with the minister. Making their salute they were passing on, when the rev. Donald stopped, saying to his companion: "These are two brave lads, captain, you have here."

"Yes," was the reply, "two brave fellows."

"I am happy to see you, young men. I like to see those so young early imbued with the spirit that animated the worthies of old when they went up against the idolater. In the hour of danger 'be strong, quit you like men,' my lads, 'quit you like men.'"

"We will, sir; we will try," exclaimed both in chorus as the minister and officer moved on.

"A brave minister, Hal."

"Yes, but did you hear that queer apprentice? He has no faith; doesn't believe in the hatchet!"

"No?"

"Not he!"

They strolled along till they came to the Meeting-house, where they sat down upon the steps. Neither spoke for some minutes. William's thoughts were away back in Woodside, alternating between Mary and his

mother. Then his eyes filled with tears. He turned away to hide them from Harry. But it was not necessary. Harry's own eyes were blinded, and he was doing his best to hide them from William.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS.

It was late in the afternoon of the day of the departure, when Mary awoke from the feverish sleep into which she had fallen in William's room, whither she had gone with his mother on their return from the village. They had lain down together in bed, and Mary had cried herself to sleep in Mrs. Farley's arm. When she awoke, the sinking sun was streaming in upon her, touching her hair into more than its golden hue. She had been dreaming of her lover, as in the olden days before this great trial had come upon them. But as she opened her eyes, the dread reality of the last few hours smote her to the heart, with all its bitterness intensified by her dreams. Could she look upon his going even as his mother did, could she look upon it as did the other young girls of the village whose lovers had departed that morning, her agony would have been borne patiently; but,—and then the remembrance of what she alone and her family knew pierced her afresh, wringing from her a tortured cry which rang through the house like a wail from the lost. Mrs. Farley was beside her in a moment, followed quickly by her father, who was yet in the house, and the deacon. They found her unconscious

on the bed. Yielding at length to the simple restoratives at hand, she opened here eyes slowly and stared with a bewildered look around the room.

"Where is William?" she at last cried wildly. "Where is William?"

"Oh, Mary, doant yer know?" gasped her father almost beside himself with fear. Then he groaned, and was on the point of repeating his freaks enacted long ago when as a child she came near death from drowning, but he was stopped by Mrs. Farley's hoarse whisper:

"Hush! 'Bijah, hush! Run for the minister—quick!"

She saw that the overstrained nerves had given way at last, and that the child was now in the wild delirium of fever. Dazed and bewildered Abijah crept down stairs, blinded with this new and unexpected trouble. The dear old pastor was quietly dozing in his study, resting after the trying hours through which he had pssed when, aroused by a sharp knock at the street door, he threw on his coat and tottered downstairs, cheerily muttering aloud: "Oh well, well, these weary limbs of mine are not what they once were. I do feel tired and shakey enough to-day; but there is a time coming when I will be myself again." Opening the door, the pained face of Abijah startled him, accustomed as he was to such sights.

"Oh, sur, cum right over t' th' deeken's. Mary's tuk a turn, sir, jest like th' wan's ded an' gone."

"Ah, poor child, dear child, she is young and this trial is hard for her to bear; it is hard, but she will be all right shortly. She will be right in a short time, never fear."

"Oh, sur, its worse nor that; she's took a turn, sir, jest like th' wan's ded an' gone—lost her mind, an' raves for th' deeken's boy."

Mr. Fenwick, who possessed the only medical skill in the village, now took in the situation at once. Hastening back to the study and thrusting into his pockets the few simple remedies always kept on hand, he rejoined the all but crazed father at the door, and was soon by the side of the sufferer. She knew no one. At one moment she would cry in horror, "Go away—go away! I cannot!" and then she would call so plaintively for William that the tears would start in every eye, the kind old minister struggling in vain to compose himself for the sake of the others.

"When did this come on?" he whispered to Mrs Farley.

"A few minutes ago we heerd her acryin' eout. She'd ben asleep. Hush!" as the young girl commenced moaning and muttering: "William, oh, William! Some one is going that means you harm—that means you harm. William!"

Comprehending the full gravity of the case, Mr. Fenwick realized, as he had never done in his life before, his own utter insufficiency to meet the requirements of the hour. Lifting his heart to the Giver of all wisdom to be directed aright in what he should do, he was soon busily engaged in doing all in his power for the suffering girl. It was but little he could do, and he knew it. "I can't do much," he said in a whisper to the noble woman who was assisting him, "I can't do much, and it is not much any human being can do now. We must pray to Him 'who saith and it is done,' and trust Him for the rest." When all they could do had been done, Mr. Fenwick requested the two men to go downstairs, saying, in low tones, that he would remain in the room with Mrs. Farley. As soon as they were alone, he motioned the woman to a chair and, seating himself beside her, asked in a low voice, "Have you noticed what the poor child has been saying in her delirium?"

"Oh, yes indeed, I hev ben anoticin' on it."

"Have you any idea if there has been trouble on her mind beside the departure of the boys?"

"Oh, dear me, I've never thort of that. What trouble?"

"There are many things which——"

"William!" and the two watchers were at the bedside in a moment; "William, some one is going that means you harm!"

Mrs. Farley shook convulsively as the minister turned to her with a perplexed look on his face. A new and terrible dread began to dawn upon her. As the girl's lips ceased moving the two stepped lightly back to their seats.

"I allers thort ez heow they talked abeout things ez never happened," the pained woman at last managed to say. "Dew ye think thar's anythin' in what she's ben sayin'?' and the full depths of her loving heart were mirrored in the intensified look of agony raised to her pastor's face.

"I would not give you unnecessary alarm," was the reply, after a moment's hesitation, "but I cannot well understand her continual repeating of this strange expression. But, come, come," he added in the same breath, "don't be cast down; it is hard telling what fancies may pass through a fevered brain. Let us hope, and have faith in God."

"Oh, me boy, me poor William!"

He led the alarmed and bewildered mother to the foot of the stair, and then crept back to the side of his patient—"This is strange; this is very strange. What can she mean? Can there be anything in it? Let me see. Who would harbor evil designs against the lad? I know them all, every one—have known them ever since they were babes, in fact. William has always been a favorite

There is not one among them, officers or men, that I wouldn't trust. No, it can only be a wild freak of delirium."

Mary here moved uneasily in the bed and moaned wearily. She was muttering again and, as the minister bent low over to catch the words, he heard: "I can't. I love William. Oh, mercy!"

Tapping his forehead, the old man crept back to his seat, and fell into deep and prolonged thought.

CHAPTER XX.

THE MARCH TO THE SEA.

THE wailing, pleading cry of the trumpet burst forth on the quiet air of the early morning, rousing many a weary youth from his slumbers, and accelerating the movements of those who were already astir. In a few minutes the streets of the little village of Harmony were alive with the boys turning out for roll-call. They came from every quarter of the compass, and, although rubbing their eyes and yawning, many of them, as if they felt their sleep had been somewhat rudely broken, each one looked as if he were able for another day's dreary march.

"How are you, William? Feeling tired?"

It was a cheery voice that called out to him as he and Harry ran up the street to where the company was mustering.

"Tired? No; I feel grand. How are you?"

"I feel like a sojer!" was the laughing reply.

"Why yes, so do we all, I hope," said William.

"We are having a little taste of soldiering already, sure enough."

"Neow, boys, doan't yer think this heer is suthin' we didn't bargain fur?" called out a private who hailed from over the hills beyond Woodside, and who was a comparative stranger to the others.

"What is?" asked William, rather sharply.

"Why, this turnin' eout when yer want ter be abed asleep, an' all fur nuthin'."

"For nothing, is it? You will find it is for something. It is the sort of thing *we* bargained for; but if *you* bargained to have a good time, it is more than likely you will be disappointed."

"Oho! Beg yer parding for speakin' ez I did. Didn't know yer! Beg yer parding, general, or p'raps corperlur? Which is it?"

"I'm a soldier, sir, and intend to do my duty, which it is clear you don't intend to do."

"Wait till ye'll see a bagnot acomin' at yew in front of a big monseer. Ye'll not be ez brave then, I'll warrant yer."

"What do you mean, fellow?" and the hot blood surged to William's face, as with flashing eyes and clenched fists he turned full upon the man.

"Fall in—fall in!"

The sharp command of the sergeant put an end to the altercation. After the roll-call was over they were dismissed with the caution to be ready to fall in again at a moment's notice.

"Heow's th' general or corperlur?" sneered William's antagonist as soon as the ranks were broken; "when dew we march, general—I axes parding, I mean corperlur?"

With a bound William was upon him. A dexterous

movement of hand and foot, quick as a flash, sent the cowardly fellow sprawingly full length in the mud. Clutching him by the throat with the left hand, the other poised, Harry darted forward just in time to catch his comrade's arm and so prevented the blow. "I'll give you general or corporal whichever you like, my fine fellow—I'll teach you civility, you ruffian!"

"Let him up, William, let him up; he is not worth minding."

The man struggled desperately to get free, but he was held like a child in the grip of the enraged youth. "I'll general or corporal you," as the fingers tightened on the throat till the wretch turned livid with rage and foamed at the mouth with madness to find himself so completely mastered. "Now get up!" and William sprang to his feet, bringing his man with him, but with his grasp firm on the throat.

"I'll teach you manners," and the youth drew off and made as if he would strike the coward in the face, who, now frenzied with rage and fear, struggled more desperately than ever to be free. A crowd of the boys had by this time gathered around them.

"What's the matter, William—what's up?"

"This chap is up now, but he was down a moment ago. I'm now putting the brave soldier through his facings, that's all!" and the fellow was hustled up against the fence—then, with a last vigorous shake, was sent sprawling headlong into the gutter. The boys set up a shout, for William was a general favorite, and his opponent, if known at all, was known but to be despised. Rising to his feet, like a wild beast brought to bay, the discomfited ruffian shook his fists in the air, only however thereby calling forth more derisive cheers from the crowd. Then, turning on his heel, he strode off with an oath and a muttered threat of vengeance.

"What was he doing, William?" asked a half-dozen at once when he was gone.

"He was doing enough to receive more than he got," was the reply.

"Oh, well," said one, "Jacob Waterman don't amount to much any way. I'm sorry he's one of us, that's all!"

"You know him, then?" put in Harry.

"I know enough of him not to care to know more."

The crowd now dispersed and separated for breakfast. As they entered the smith's house the two young soldiers found a hearty meal awaiting them to which, not at all disturbed by the exciting episode on the street, they proceeded forthwith to do ample justice. They had scarcely finished when the blare of the trumpet called them all to their feet.

"The Lord bless ye, boys, an' be reound abeout ye ez ye go inter th' battle," exclaimed the honest blacksmith, with a touch of huskiness in his throat, and he shook each by the hand at the door; "I'll walk up t' see ye off, tho' I 'spose there'll be no time thar to talk much."

The men were now gathering from all quarters. The Harmony company had fallen into line; and soon the Woodside boys had taken up their position beside them. The officers were gathered together in front, and among them, conspicuous for pomposity, was noticed the redoubtable chaplain, if possible more consequential than ever. The roll having been called, the reverend soldier proceeded to harangue the troops. Stepping forward from his companions, and holding up the ubiquitous hatchet in his right hand, he exclaimed in his most sonorous tones:

"Fellow-soldiers! We are going forth and going up to the help of the Lord against the mighty! When the city of abominations falls, as fall it will, having been foreordained from all eternity to fall, with these mine

hands, you will behold me, hewing down the idols of Rome!"

A movement in the crowd of civilians in the rear was at this time noticeable, and the irrepressible apprentice was seen emerging from the midst, running off with his head bent down, and his face covered with his hands. As he crossed the flank of the men, Harry caught sight of the outrageous fellow, and forgetting everything burst into a roar of laughter.

"Silence—silence in the ranks," thundered Capt. Allen as he strode down the line. "Were it not for the occasion, I would place you under immediate arrest!"

Poor Harry felt badly enough to have all eyes thus directed upon him, but he was soon relieved by the sonorous tones of the chaplain leading in prayer. It was such a prayer as such a man might be expected to make, the burden of it being that he himself might have strength given him to smite down the graven images of the idolater. A few words from each of the chief officers, and the command was given. In the midst of tears and of cheers, the battalion filed off and out of the village by the road leading to the sea.

CHAPTER XXI.

HOPE!

LEAVING William and Harry on the dreary march, we must return to her who is dearer to both than life, and whom we left in the wild tossings of delirium. Day followed day, night followed night, and the idol of so many hearts hovered nigh unto the grave.

What a fearful mystery is that with which we are encompassed! We do not know, perhaps we never shall know, perchance the white light of eternity even may never reveal it to us, how our destiny has been made to hinge, as it were, upon an accident, our whole future quivering for the moment in the trembling balances of trifles. Have you ever thought, gentle reader, as sitting down you communed with your own heart—have you even thought as you have looked backward along the way you have come—have you ever thought, and trembled as you thought it, that there have been times in your life's history when you walked within the dark shadow of death, so near the mystic partition that separates the tangible from the intangible, that had you but ears to hear there might have been heard upon the other side the rustling of a wing in the gloom—had you but eyes to see you might have seen the glories of those spiritual realities which to our holden sight is now invisible? We are so near to death at times! So much appears to our imperfect comprehension to rest upon the capricious accidents of the moment. Our whole future has been changed for weal or woe by what to us was but a trifle lighter than air. In the full sunshine of the hey-day of prosperity we may have arisen in the morning, and in the evening lain down in sorrow. Surrounded by mystery, we live, and move, and have our being in mystery. Who is he that, with the eye of the seer, shall tell us what to avoid, so that unbroken peace shall flow gently as a river adown the green meadows of the years? We strive, in the blindness of our mortal state, after that which eludes us, mocks us as it lures us on. Do this and thou shalt succeed! We do it and are undone. Here we walk in the gloaming of the grave. The backward shadows of death throw their dread presence down upon

our joys, and while grasping the bubbles that dance before our gaze, lo, in our hand are ashes and the dust of the dead. The pathway along which we walk is strewn thick with pitfalls. When trying to avoid this one, into that we stumble; while here, in the slough of despond, we crawl out upon the green turf, only to find it a deceitful quagmire, through whose treacherous sands we must wallow, till at length, with bespattered garments and weary limbs, we find rest for our feet perchance where we least expected it. Then we stagger on again over stony places, marking the path with our blood. We cry out of the deep depths for deliverance from the hardness of the way; and when, as if in answer to the cry, the way grows smoother, lo, here beneath us is an abyss of sorrow, to which we never should have come had we contentedly walked where we were. Humanly speaking, life is a grotesque medley of comedy and tragedy, apparently without plan or purpose. But down upon the mystery of our being—when ready to give up in despair—down over the darkness streams the bright light of a Father's face, and lo, in the gloom see we, by the eye of faith, "One like unto the appearance of a man"—hear we by the ear of faith the echoes of a voice divine, "Let not your heart be troubled"—"What I do now ye know not, but ye shall know hereafter!" . . . .

On the results of a moment hang tragedies. Had little Mary died our tale would here have ended—it never would have begun.

Day followed day, and night night, yet the tender-hearted old pastor could with difficulty be coaxed from the bedside. He felt that more depended on the outcome of this fearful struggle than the mere fact of a single life or death. The incoherent muttering of the sufferer told him all that he wanted to know, more than he cared to

know. With a deep and abiding faith in God he bent his energies to the task before him, hoping when all else had ceased to hope, trusting when all others were but waiting for the end. No thought of the doctrines or the decrees entered into his calculations. He watched and prayed as if everything depended on his watching and praying, and whatever he might have preached about the eternal fixedness of all human destiny, he did not appear to count it now as a factor at all to be considered in the case before him. For nights he had never returned to his home, but snatched a few hours' sleep as best he could—sometimes in the sick room, sometimes stretched on the old settee in the kitchen below where the absent one had so often rested after the labors of the day were over. For the last two nights and days he was almost constantly by the bedside. The sun has sunk to rest; but here there is no rest. The birds have hushed their ringing notes of praise beneath the window, but there is no hushing of the heart-throbs of the watchers. Darkness descends and wraps the landscape with gloom, but it is light compared with the dreariness of those troubled souls. The silence of the grave itself has settled down on the watching group as the hours drag themselves slowly, broken only by the suppressed sob or the weirdly muttered phantasies of the sufferer's brain. 'Tis midnight—strange, mysterious hour, when the tide of life at best runs low, when the muffled oar of the dread boatman oftenest smites on the ear, and the silver cord that moors the fragile barque grows weak with backward tossings on the receding wave. Hush! The old man nodding in his chair is on his feet and bends down over the bed. The breathing grows softer—softer, and the little form that for those awful nights has writhed in suffering agony grows calm. Like a tired child in its

mother's arms she sinks into a peaceful slumber, while hope, thrice-blessed hope, breathes down upon the watcher its benediction of peace.

"Thanks be unto God!"

It was all he said as, stealing softly down stairs, the minister sank upon the settee and was soon wrapped in profound and refreshing sleep. How beautiful he looked as the lines smoothed out one by one from his forehead, over which the long, white hair fell in graceful carelessness. More like a little child than a man he looked—like the babe smiling sweetly in its dreams when the angels fan its face with their wings as they pass. Let him sleep!

It was late next morning when Mary awoke. The minister would not leave till he could speak to her. They were all waiting in her room, and at last the tired eyes slowly opened and she looked at the group wearily, but with an intelligent enquiry on her face. The father bent down and kissed her tenderly. Then they all followed before she ventured to say a word. At length:

"What has been the matter? Oh, I've had such a frightful dream!"

"Yew hev ben sick, darlin'," said Mrs. Farley softly, as the tears poured down her cheeks.

"Yes," added Mr. Fenwick quickly, "but you are better now. Take this, and you must sleep again."

Mrs. Farley advanced with a bowl of steaming broth, duly tinctured with a strong decoction of her own precious "yarbs" put in unbeknown to the minister. The sick girl took a spoonful or two, then closed her eyes languidly and was soon fast asleep again.

"It is better for her than food; let her sleep all she can. Now I must away. I fear there are many others who have been waiting for me, and I must off. I will be

over again to-night," and, with a whispered blessing, the holy man was gone.

Mary's recovery after this was rapid. In the course of a few days she was strong enough to sit for a while, well wrapped, in a chair by the window. Mrs. Farley, with the instincts of a true woman, never referred once to the strange mutterings that had been heard in delirium. But she pondered them all in her own heart nevertheless. It was some days before the young invalid was considered strong enough to be removed to her home. Before this, several letters had arrived from the boys, full of hope and love. They were all written, however, previous to the embarkation, and now for a long time nothing had been heard from them.

Sitting in the kitchen with Mrs. Farley, the evening before she was to go home, Mary looked even more lovely than ever. She bore the marks of the fearful ordeal through which she had passed, it is true, but this only added to her charms, giving a soft refinement to her features impossible to describe.

"Mary!"

The girl started from her reverie and turned her beautiful eyes on the speaker.

"What's makin' on yew look so sad like?"

"Oh, why do you ask? I have enough—have we not all enough to make us look sad?"

"Yes, darlin', but yew seems t' me tew hev more'n yer mind nor th' rest on us, an'——"

Mary started again and scrutinized her friend's face with an alarmed look.

"Yes," she replied wearily, after a moment's pause, "I *have* more on my mind than the rest and—and it is killing me. It has already nigh killed me!"

The tears flowed copiously as she hid her face in her

hands. Mrs. Farley moved close to her and drew the weeping girl to her breast, folding her motherly arms round about her. When the sobbing had ceased the mother spoke:

"I kno' all abeout it, Mary dear; all abeout it! I doan't know what's it abeout, but I kno' yer frightened abeout William more'n any on us. Couldn't yew be a tellin' on me what's it abeout? I'll help yew t' bear it like."

"Oh, don't; don't ask me, for heaven's sake! I cannot tell you—I dare," but she broke down again. When she became a little calmer Mrs. Farley ventured to ask, but with considerable misgiving as to the wisdom of the question: "Be yew afeard that William hez an enemy among th' boys?"

The girl started this time like a frightened bird. "Who told you that?" and she trembled with fear. "Who told you that?"

Footsteps were here heard at the door, and, before the amazed woman could reply, her husband entered, followed by Abijah.

CHAPTER XXII.

IN THE DEPTHS!

THE alarmed look of his wife arrested the deacon's attention immediately upon entering. He wanted to know what had happened, but received no reply, Mary rising and going up stairs to her room.

"What's th' matter neow?" querulously asked her father as she disappeared.

"We've ben atalkin' 'beout what she used t' be asayin' in her sickness abeout William."

"Hez she ben atellin' on ye?" he hastily interrupted.

"She's ben atellin' on me nothin'."

"No?"

"Not a word. 'Bijah, see aheer. Yew've allers ben a friend; dew ye knw what's th' matter?"

He hung his head a few moments in silence: "Yez, I dew!"

"What is it, then?" exclaimed the deacon and his wife together. "What is it, then, Abijah?"

"Yew mustn't ax me!"

They both knew that after that further questioning for the present at least was useless. For some minutes no one broke the silence that followed. It was a sore trial enough for them to have their darling boy exposed to the perils of the deep, and the still more fearful perils of war; but now to realize that perhaps at that very moment he was at the mercy of some cowardly ruffian, who, they could not for their lives imagine,—oh, it was too much for their already bleeding hearts to bear. No outward emotion was however manifested by either. The poor mother felt her tears could not flow sufficiently in view of the new and dread calamity, all the more terrible on account of the mystery which obscured it. She arose and busied herself with her household duties, and in a short time Abijah went home, saying as he closed the door that he would come up for Mary on the morrow.

When her work was done, Mrs. Farley sat down beside her husband. He had become intensely human during those last few weeks. The doctrines just at this time seemed to have lost their power over him. He was now not nearly so much the deacon as the man. He seemed doubly dear to his wife. He was to her fond heart what

she had so long and earnestly prayed for in the past—just the same loving embodiment of humanity he had been before becoming petrified by the mysteries. Sitting here in the flickering light of the smouldering embers on the hearth, with the lines of care on his handsome face brought into alternate distinctness and shadow, it would be hard to find a nobler-looking man. His thoughts were now too deep for utterance, his soul was moved by the significant words he had heard. His wife sat down and leant her head upon his shoulder, just as she used to do years ago when their darling was asleep in the cradle. She did not weep; her grief dried up her tears. In a half dreamy state she waited for him to break the silence; but he only drew her tenderly towards him till she nestled close to his heart. He did not speak. It was no time for words.

Why is it that when a great trouble comes suddenly upon us the tongue that ceaselessly complains of little worries is stilled? Is it the rising up within us of the latent forces hitherto inactive, the rising into life of undeveloped reserve powers that all along have been dormant? Is it the instillation of a mysterious but felt energy from without that then enables us to stand erect in silent majesty beneath the load that would otherwise crush us to the earth? How often have we seen the querulous man and the worrying woman fretting over the light bubbles on life's stream; but when the great waves of sorrow rose as if to submerge them in a common ruin, they walked unmoved in deep waters with a serenity not of this world? Have we not seen the mother bowed to the ground in an agony of grief as the pet of the household lay "in the valley of the shadow," but when the shadow closed around her in blackness, settling down to the dread reality of death; when the little one floated away out

into the silence of unbroken dreams, no baptism of tears has discovered the bleeding heart of the mother to the gaze of the world! She bows silently beneath the rod. There comes here a never-failing source of consolation to those who walk wearily along the dark pathway of life fearing the yawning grave which one day may claim their loved. He who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb will not forget us then, He will never leave nor forsake those who trust Him.

Trust Him and do our work! Herein is hope. Not the blind fatalism of the "doctrines" that leads its votaries to float listlessly amidst seething billows awaiting a miracle that will never come; but the hope of faith that with a burning heart of love throws up its arms to God and clings with the tenacity of death to the promises. What a horrible phantasy would be life divorced from the infinitude of the divine compassion! There is in every heart so much of sorrow, the checkered web of our being is so often woven in colors of blood—the way of our pilgrimage is so often baptized with our tears, the hollow echoes of our groaning cries so often reverberate from the dark, dank walls of our prison, that to him who looks not above and beyond awaiting with patience the great day of revealing, when apparent cruelties shall be made radiant in the light of redeeming love—when the record of our years shall be squared by the discriminations of an eternal justice—what a grim, ghastly mockery is it all! We never may entirely understand the secret motives which guided our destinies in this sphere of action; but reasoning from analogy, it is certain we may assume that He who doeth all things well shall ultimately vindicate Himself to every man's heart and conscience. To those who believe that we are the victims of blind fortuitous circumstances or inexorable fate, life has no

charms, existence no joys. To those who, through bewildering sorrow, look away unto the hills whence cometh their help, there is no aspect of this world's experience, however bitter, but the vision of faith sees hidden in the clouds the sunbeams. The subduing thought that we are never so far gone out of the way as to be beyond the reach of the "eternal goodness" when we cry, comes to the oft-times weary spirit like dew upon the parched ground. The "peace-be-still" of Him who spake as never man spake, whispers to us then with a new and unutterable meaning. What to him are the dark places of a cursed world who knows that on the other side the effulgent light of a Father's face doth shine? We weep at the grave of buried hopes! It is but human. It is the outflowing of our humanity voiced in sobs. Point you to him whose cynical stoicism prohibits this manifestation of our humanness, and you point to one whose heart has never felt the cleansing luxury of tears. There was One so "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" that at the grave of a friend He wept. "He groaned in the Spirit and was troubled." The spectacle of the weeping Christ at the tomb of Lazarus has been the consolation of the ages. "Behold how He loved him!" This bond of sympathy for our kind is "the touch of nature that makes us all akin." It is so sweet to know that our griefs are not to be borne alone—that tender souls yearn over us in love! But whilst our sympathy proves the humanity of our manhood and is a bond of brotherhood for us all, if we could but pierce the cloud which lowers above and around us, lo light, and "the hiding of His power!" We grope in "the valley of the shadow" as with feet sore and crimsoned at times with blood we stumble. Oh, how many children of affliction there are throughout our wide world, bowing low with heavy

burdens upon bended shoulders,—footsore, weary, and sad are they crying :—

"Tired—so tired!
Heart and soul and brain
Utter the same sad plaint,
Feel the same dull pain;
Tired of living and sorrowing,
Striving and hoping in vain,
Tired of the ceaseless striving
For that which we never shall gain!"

Blest thought! All this shall end; for on the other side the mountain of sorrow the billowy glory of the yet to be is but waiting to lave them in its healing flood. Then shall they know and say—

"He doeth all things well!"

Clasped in each other's arms, this father and mother, sitting here in the back-thrown shadow of an on-coming trouble, felt as they had never felt before the preciousness of such an abiding faith in God. The deacon's theology was wrong, but just now his heart was right. His consolation was now not that the decrees were propitious to the boy, but that in answer to the cries of his heart, the Almighty Parent would not desert the lad. We shall see him ere long crushed and bowed beneath the merciless logic of his creed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN DEEPER DEPTHS.

MARY had been home nigh about a week, and was now almost completely restored to health, when one evening her father came back from the village with the news that the boys had safely landed in Cape Breton, a cruiser having immediately returned.

"Why, then, are there no letters, father: they ought to have got here by this? Do you fear anything?" And the frightened look of his child pierced him to the heart.

"No, th' lad's all right so far; he'll hev nothin' t' fear till they get tew Looisburg."

He had not got over his old dislike to William, but now that his Mary loved the youth, he had learned, obstinate as he was, to make the best of it.

"Do you mean," she gasped with a ray of hope, "do you mean that he will have nothing to fear but the battle?"

"No, I didn't mean jest that."

Her spirits sank again within her, and as the father said nothing more, she rose and went to her little chamber to weep and pray, That was now her only solace—weeping and praying. She felt as if her prayers were answered in her tears; for they were always followed by rest and consolation. She had been reared in innocent simplicity, amidst pure surroundings. Her unsophisticated heart knew nought of the dark ways of the world. Never having known much of the sweet love of a mother, she had found in soul-communion with God that strength for life's battles which otherwise would have been denied

her. She had never, like her father and others, been troubled about either doctrines or mysteries, but had learned by the study of the Book that "God is love." Her prayers were, as a consequence, the pleadings of a child with a fond parent. In her confiding heart never lurked the shadow of a suspicion that He to whom she talked in pleading supplication was not near to help in time of need. Had the minister or deacon been acquainted with her theology, they would have been grievously shocked and pained to find her a greater heretic than her father; but they knew nothing about it, nor did she know it herself. All she knew was that no iron fetters locked up the infinite compassion of God from His trusting child. She read that in the Book, and with all the sermons that she had heard, never dreamed that her beloved pastor would restrict its meaning in the slightest degree. She believed God to be a father who loved His children and wanted them all to love Him in return. She little thought that the kindly old man who had shed so many tears during these troublous times, believed from the depths of his heart that God had created myriads of human beings that He neither loved, nor would He give them the power to love Him. She read in the Book that God would have all men to be saved. She little imagined, the dear child, in the simplicity of her soul, that the loved pastor would explain the "all" as not meaning all, but only the elect; and that for her to believe differently would, at least in the opinion of her darling William's father, reduce her own chances of belonging to the "all" to a minimum. Blessed child! In her ignorance she was happily oblivious to the niceties and subtleties of the doctrines which reigned all but supreme around her.

As she entered her little chamber this evening, the weight that pressed her to the earth appeared so heavy

that she realized as never before the precious consolation of communion with her heavenly Father. The hot tears gushed out through the tiny fingers clasped over her eyes. Her soul was heavy; but in the baptism of sorrow there came the balm of hope. She remained upon her knees by the bedside alternating between weeping and praying, till aroused by a strange voice below in earnest conversation with her father. A stranger in those parts was of so rare occurrence that she crept stealthily to the head of the stairs and listened.

"I'll tak' it meself," she heard her father say; "give it t' me!"

"No sech thing," responded a gruff voice, "no sech thing, I tell ye! I want ter give it inter own hand!"

She did not wait for more, but was in the kitchen in a moment, confronting as she entered a rough-looking man in sailor's garb.

"Be yew Mary Oliver, neow?" he asked rather dubiously, evidently taken aback by the striking beauty of the little woman before him.

"I am. What do you want?"

"I've got suthin' tew give yew. I've got a letter fur yew from—halloa, what wuz I goin' t' say? I got a letter fur yew ennyway," and he commenced fumbling in his pocket. It was plain enough that the unexpected loveliness of the girl had so surprised the man that for the time he did not quite know either what he was doing or saying. At last he drew forth a dirty crumpled letter, and, eying her askance and half abashed, held it out to the trembling girl ready to grasp it. One glance at the address and she staggered back and would have fallen to the floor had not her father caught her in his arms.

That a manly heart was concealed under the sailor's forbidding exterior was plain enough, for he no sooner

saw that she had recovered than he stepped towards the door, saying he would remain outside till the letter was read.

"Read it, Mary," gasped the father with alarm as soon as they were alone; "read it. What's in it?"

She tore the letter open, and with a glance took in its contents.

"Read it, Mary. Eout with it. What's in it. Who's it frum?"

She began reading and then stopped, amazed at her own calmness and fearing lest her mind might be giving way. Then she commenced again, going on to the end without a quiver in her voice:

"CANSO, April 6th, 1745.

"TO MISS MARY OLIVER:

"This will be handed you by a man who will receive your reply and carry it to me. Copy the enclosed and send with it a lock of your hair. *Refuse, and your brave William will all the sooner meet his doom.*

"Signed, ————."

Folded inside was another paper, which the girl perused pale with horror.

"What's it, Mary? Speak, child. What's in t'other wan?"

She read it over to him as calmly as she did the first.

"Wurld's alive!" exclaimed her father, not knowing what he was saying, "seems t' me queer! What ken he want of yer har, child?"

"Can't you see?" she asked in the same calm tone.

"No, I'm a thinkin' on it over ez hard ez I ken, but I 'low I kent mak' it eout!"

"A plot to ruin me, father; to betray me to William!"

"Not that bad, oh no, not so bad ez that! No man could be ez bad ez that!"

"No, father, no man, but *he* can, and *will!*"

There was a silence for a minute.

"What'll ye dew, Mary?"

"Nothing!"

"Nothin'?"

"Just nothing!"

She spoke so decidedly and calmly that her father looked at her in amazement.

"Nothin'?"

"No, nothing!"

"Then—William's dun fur!" was the slow but solemn response.

A shuddering paroxysm smote the girl and she staggered to her feet. The father caught her again in his arms and drew her on his knee.

"If I give him this letter then I am doomed, while it won't save William." Her calmness was gone, and she gasped hysterically.

"Heow's that, Mary?"

"Why, don't you see, he will show it to William to make him think I am false!"

The dull father hadn't thought of that, but now it struck conviction to his mind in an instant. He held his child close to his heart. He spoke slowly:

"Mary, ef yew doan't send it, th' lad's dun fur; ef yew dew send it an' trust in God, it may cum eout all right!"

She had never heard her father speak like that in all her life. It sounded more like the minister than like her poor stupid father.

Hailing it as an omen of good she slipped down out of his arms upon the floor to her knees. Almost instantly rising she crossed the room to the window, caught up a pair of scissors and with the utmost deliberation cut off one of the luxuriantly beautiful curls that hung upon her shoulders. Then, with her former calmness strong upon

her, she lighted a candle and ascended to her own room to write the dreaded letter.

When she returned the father admitted the sailor. Advancing towards him with the sealed letter in her hand, she said with a composure that again astounded herself, "Here is my answer; give it to ——."

"I'll dew that, Miss, yew mebbe shure."

"Did you sail with the men for Louisburg?"

"I did that, yew mebbe shure."

"Why did you come back so soon?"

"Oho! Neow yew've got me. I dunno!"

"When do you sail?"

"When I gets back, I 'spose."

"Were the boys well when you left?" and her calmness deserting her she blushed to the eyes as she asked it.

"Oho! neow you're axin' tew much agen! There wuz tew meny of them thar fur me to ax abeout each wan's helth!" and he squinted at her in a good-natured, roguish way as if he would say, "Oho, I see what's the matter!"

"Would you take a letter to my brother and give it into his own hands? His name is Harry Oliver, in Capt. Allen's company."

"See aheer neow, I'm paid fur this air job, an' I'm thinkin' th' way yew tuk on that everything aint jest right; howsumever, I'll tak' yourn seein' its yew ez axes," and with that chivalric devotion towards women which in every clime characterizes men of the sea, this awkward but kindly fellow stood respectfully, cap in hand, before the girl awaiting further orders. It was a hurriedly written note, in sooth, she held out to him addressed to her brother, the purport of which was the demand that had been made upon her, her compliance therewith, concluding with an agonizing appeal to see that William was

warned of the conspiracy in some way or other without violating their enforced promise of secrecy.

"See aheer, neow," exclaimed the sailor taking the letter, "I kant read. This wan's th' brother's, an' t'other wan's th'—so! Neow I know them—small wan's th' brother's."

With an appealing request to give Harry's into his own hand, and to none else, the sailor departed.

The situation in which the affectionate girl was now placed was a trying one. Whichever way she looked she saw ruin staring her full in the face. Lifting her heart to God, she kissed her dejected father good-night, crept up stairs, and cried herself to sleep.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE VOYAGE.

THE incidents on the march and immediately previous to embarkation were many—some ludicrous, others laughable, more tragic. The Rev. Donald McDonald made a speech from the deck of his ship to the assembled citizens on the wharves, flourishing his hatchet and breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the images of Rome. There were not a few in the crowd who thought the chaplain more zealous than wise, while more than one was bold enough to develop a scepticism anent the images worthy of our acquaintance, Ned Gilchrist himself. William and Harry, had already begun to form an opinion of his reverence not much more exalted. They had never seen it after this fashion. All their lives

had they been accustomed to look upon their own dear old pastor as the personification of everything that was true, pure, and of good report. Towards his person there was entertained a profound respect by all classes in the village. He was their friend. He loved everyone, and everyone loved him. For any to doubt the minister's sincerity would have been deemed by all as bordering on downright blasphemy. To William and Harry it was no wonder that the mere thought of Mr. Fenwick's flourishing a battle-axe had in it something so absurdly ludicrous that it created in their minds a revulsion of feeling not by any means flattering to the reverend Chaplain McDonald. Neither were they slow in noticing that those from his own village, who ought to know him best, were scarcely respectful in their remarks when the "idols of Rome" happened to mentioned. The boys soon made friends among the strange volunteers from the other colonies; and it was not much to be wondered at if the exciting scenes through which they were passing made them for a time almost forget the sad hearts at home. But for a very, very short time.

The first night at sea the two lads elected to remain on deck in preference to going below.

"I say, Hal, this is grand!" remarked William to his comrade as the two leant over the taffrail watching the trail of light left by their ship on the plunging waves. "I say, Hal, this is grand. We would never have been at sea in all our lives but for this war!"

"I suppose not," said the other, but not quite so enthusiastically.

"Look at that wave!" cried William with animation as a mountain billow over which the ship had dashed piled itself high above them.

"How bright it is to-night, Hal," and the speaker

turned his eyes from the sparkling waters to the moon sailing on in the heavens, and the thought that loved ones in the far-off home might perhaps be gazing in the same direction cast a momentary gloom upon his spirits.

"Do you think, Hal," he continued after some moments' silence, "do you think when we die we shall see the moon and the stars as they are—perhaps visit them?"

"What a strange question, William," replied the other with a shudder; "what put such a queer thought in your head?"

"O, I don't know; but everything has been so different from what we have been used to up there at home that my mind is full of strange thoughts. But, now, what do you think; do you suppose we shall visit them?"

"Do I think we shall see the moon and the stars just as they are? Why, William, you are older than I, and my teacher besides. It is not fair to ask me such a question. I have never thought of anything like this before."

"I think we will see them and know all about them. I have been thinking that some of those stars may be heaven; in a word, that each star is a mansion in the Father's house! Do you remember the blessed words, 'In my Father's house are many mansions?' I do believe that those glorious stars are the mansions to which the Lord refers. Look there, look at that one," and he pointed to a peculiarly brilliant orb that twinkled and shone vividly in spite of the moonlight; "if I could choose one, I would like to go there when I die. I could look down and perhaps—who knows?—see all that is going on!"

"Oh, William, you make me feel so with all this talk! I never thought of such things in all my life. I wish I were home again with Mary," and the boy brushed away a tear that trickled down his cheek.

"Yes, I would that we were both there if the war were over, not before. How sweet our homes will be to us in the future, Hal? What is that that Cicero says about one's home? Can you recall it, for really I can't?"

"You can't? He says, '*Nullus est locus domestica sede jucundior.*' Why, you quoted that to me long before I knew anything about it myself."

"Did I? No doubt I did; but while it is true enough, it is not for us just now. However, our own fireside will be all the 'more delightful' when we get back again!"

"William, what was making you talk about death just now? We are but boys, you know."

"Yes, but boys die as well as men, don't they?"

His companion shuddered. "Oh, William, don't talk so, please. It is late now; had we not better go to sleep?"

"Sleep? '*Alliciant somnos tempus motusque merumque,*' as Ovid has it. Well, neither one has so caused me to be sleepy yet, although I admit we have had motion enough. You go and lie down yourself, Hal; I want to stop here a while longer to talk to the moon and the stars!"

"And quote Latin to them?"

"No, I promise you, not another word, English or Latin, to disturb your slumbers. Lie down, Hal."

As the youths turned toward the deck the crouching figure of a man, hiding in the shadow of the great sail, glided off and was lost to view. Harry sprang after it, but stumbled over a sleeping soldier and fell upon his face. Coming back somewhat crestfallen, William asked him with a smile:

"Have you seen a ghost, Hal?"

"I wish I had," was the reply as, spreading his blanket at William's feet, the young man stretched him-

self on the deck. But not to sleep! It was nearly midnight before William took his place beside him, and was soon wrapped in profound slumber. Harry was so confidant that the retreating figure he had seen had been listening to their conversation and meant them no good, that sleep was banished from his eyes. Sleep! How could he think of such a thing with danger hovering so near? How strange was his lot! He was a mere boy, yet he felt that not only the safety of his companion was committed to his care, but the future weal or woe of her he loved dearer than his own life. His own life? Why that counted just nothing in his estimate of the situation. Could he send William back to her alive and well by the sacrifice of his own life, it would be done willingly—gladly. But what could he do? He dare not break his promise—a promise sacredly made to his sister for the last time the night before they had left. And yet to say nothing might mean death, ruin to them all. He would not keep it! Mary had promised secrecy under compulsion. There was no moral obligation to keep any such promise. Why shouldn't he warn William and put him on his guard? Yes, he would do it the first thing in the morning. But why wait till the morning? If his fears were well-grounded, the man he had seen was an enemy; and he knew only too well that the warning William had received from Mary had been treated lightly—in fact, was not thought of at all. He had attributed it to feminine timidity, nor did he grasp any other meaning from her words than that some of the boys might have a grudge against him for winning the dear little girl's heart. What did he care for the boys? They would have enough to think about and more than enough without recalling boyish disappointments like that. Brave as a lion himself he feared nothing, and like every brave man he suspected

nothing. What was Harry's duty? Was it not plainly to break a promise given without thought, and crave Mary's forgiveness afterwards, than see his friend run into the arms of danger unwarned? It was clearly his duty. He would do it. He would warn him whenever he opened his eyes in the morning. But why wait till the morning? Why not now? Why not waken him at once; and he grasped the arm of his sleeping friend and shook him till he awoke. William sat up and rubbed his eyes: "What is it, Hal; another ghost, eh?"

"Oh, my dear William!"

"Why, what in the world is the matter with the boy?" and he turned his eyes upon the poor lad as he continued, laughing, "Oh, I see how it is; I have frightened you with my nonsense! Never mind it, Hal; never mind it! Go to sleep now; take your rest, as Ovid would say, '*Da requiem; requietus ager bene credita reddit!*'" and he stretched himself back on his blanket again, and with a yawn was soon off into the land of forgetfulness.

CHAPTER XXV.

AN OLD ENEMY.

THE following morning poor Harry found his resolution of the previous night had vanished with the light. With the bright March sun streaming down from an unclouded sky, touching the wide expanse of waters with its golden fingers till the sea sparkled like a pavement set with diamonds, his youthful spirits once more asserted themselves, and he laughed at William's sallies of wit and

Latin quotations, boy-like, as if no danger was hanging like a dark cloud above them both.

The breakfast on deck that morning was a boisterous, rollicking affair. Those who, during the first few hours out, had paid unwilling tribute to Neptune, were now on their feet again, enjoying the chaff at their own expense with the utmost good nature.

There is something in the wild freedom of the waves that lifts a man above and out of himself. It was a remark of a French renegade, that the bewildering sense of absolute abandon which came over him as, mounted on his fiery Arab steed, he flew on the wings of the wind across the desert, had such an intoxicating effect upon his spirits that he could only maintain reason on its throne by venting the mad frenzy of his soul in cheers, and shouts, and screams. So is it upon the sea where deep calleth unto deep. The wailing moaning as of countless voices—the rippling music of the waves baptizing the gallant ship—the lonely stretch of the billowy pavement around and on every hand—the sighing song of the breeze through the rigging—the screaming of the storm-birds above the waters, all these have in them a something so unlike the experience of the land that we are carried captive with the exuberance of our spirits.

The boys ate their bread and meat this morning with a relish no landsman ever knows, while jokes, cheers and snatches of song were heard on all sides.

"Come, old fellow, what's work on the farm to this?" cried a great honest-looking man to William, who, stretched full length upon the deck, was munching away at his food.

"Why, you are right there," was the reply, "sure enough, what is work on the farm to this, and as for Greek and Latin, well, they are about the next best, I suppose."

"O, yew'll find eout that th' farm 'ill be better'n th' trenches at Looisburg," sang out another.

"You, go away," shouted the first speaker, "what trenches?"

"What trenches? Why, doan't yew know we'll hev tew dig all areound the old place, an' in under it tew, fur all I know."

"Who tole you that stuff, enyway?"

"Stuff! O, well, its true 'nough, call it what you like."

"Wal, s'posin' its true, what of it? Haven't I dug before neow?"

"Dug! What's diggin on th' farm like diggin' trenches with canorn balls an' bagnots comin' bang, bang, every minute an' knockin' yer head off?"

"Knockin' yer head off every minute! That's good! Ha! ha! ha! Canorn balls an' bagnots knockin' yer head off every minute! Ha! ha! ho! ho! ho!

"Canorn ball, o' coorse. What d'ye think we're goin' deown thar fur, enyway? Deon't yew kno' thar's thousans an' thousans of canorns deown thar?"

"Wal, what of it? We'll hev no canorn balls at all, I s'pose; O no, we'll hev no canorn balls nor bagnots! Not us. See aheer, boys, this chap thinks were goin' deown tew Looisburg jest to let them thar French moonseers hev th' fun of knockin' off our heads with canorn balls an' bagnots every minute, while all we've got t' dew is tew look on ez thar bein' knocked off."

"O, wal," replied the other, "I didn't mean jest that yew know; but we'll find it'll be pretty hard work deown thar."

"Of course, it'll be pretty hard work," retorted William; "hot work! What do you suppose we are going for but for hot work?"

"Be keerful heow yew speak to the general or corperlur," squeaked out a voice behind him. William turned sharply, and saw for the first time since coming on board his old enemy, Jacob Waterman.

"O! you're there, are you? You didn't have enough of it at Harmony, I see," and our hero sprang to his feet. "Take some more of the general again, then, or corporal, whichever you will."

"Stan' back!" cried the ruffian with an oath, unsheathing his knife.

"Look eout!" shouted a dozen voices in chorus. It was too late. Waterman, like a flash, buried his knife in William's side, at the same instant falling senseless to the deck from a blow on the head from Harry, who saw what was coming, but too late to prevent it. The boys clustered around William.

"Are yew hurt?" screamed a score at once.

"Yes, I think I must be," was the calm reply as he unbuttoned his coat. Harry rushed to his assistance just as, swaying from side to side, he tried wildly to recover himself, then sank upon the deck in his blood.

The men were mad with rage. William was a general favorite. His cowardly assailant no sooner recovered from Harry's blow than he ran off and hid himself in the hold. The wounded youth was carried below, followed by the surgeon. Harry would not leave him.

"O, doctor," cried the boy in such a pained voice that it touched every heart; "O, doctor, is he much hurt?"

"Not so badly as I at first thought. It is only a slight flesh wound—a mere scratch, in fact. He will be all right in a few days."

"Thank God!" ejaculated Harry, falling on his knees beside the berth and tenderly stroking the sufferer's hair as he had so often done his sister's at home.

William almost immediately rallied and began quieting his comrade's fears, telling him it was just nothing at all. Harry wouldn't leave him, however, and, taking one of William's hands in both his own, exclaimed as soon as they were alone: "Oh, this is worse than I feared last night. The villain must be—Oh, dear, what am I saying? I don't know what to do!"

The surgeon, who had not yet left the gangway, hearing the sobbing, returned, sternly exclaiming: "You will have to be quiet and not disturb the patient, or I will have you removed!"

"Oh, sir, don't do that, please; don't make me leave him, sir; I will be quiet!"

"All right, then!"

A guard had been detailed hastily to secure Waterman, who, after considerable search, was found stowed away behind a pile of baggage. He was immediately secured and placed in irons.

William soon fell into a broken slumber, and, as the day wore on and night approached, he showed unmistakable signs of fever. The surgeon looked grave as he came round about dark, but said nothing. By-and-bye Harry could tell that his mind was wandering. He would mutter incoherently to himself, sometimes calling his mother, but oftener Mary. Then dozing uneasily his lips would move again, and it was apparent to the intensely anxious heart of the watcher that his mind was off among the loved scenes of Woodside. Towards midnight these symptoms became so aggravated that Harry, acting upon the orders of the surgeon, gave the alarm, and the doctor was soon by the bedside. Harry was nearly beside himself with fear and anxiety. "I knew it, I knew it," he kept on muttering, wringing his hands.

"You knew what?" at length retorted the surgeon,

turning on the boy with anger. "Go on deck, sir, instantly!"

The doctor's heart smote him as soon as he spoke when he noticed the lad's pallid face. "O, well, never mind, you may stay; but do keep quiet, will you, if you love your friend."

After administering a cooling potion another watcher was detailed for the remainder of the night, and ere long Harry was fast asleep with his head resting close to William's.

When morning broke he was wild with joy to find his comrade's mind again clear, although he was much too weak to converse to any extent.

"All right now, my lad; he is all right now," exclaimed the surgeon cheerily, as he entered and glanced at his patient. "Your friend will be out of this in a day or two if you behave yourself. Off with you now and get some sleep yourself."

The surgeon's words proved true, for in a couple of days William could sit up in his berth, to the great joy of all his companions. The two youths were alone together the first evening he had got bolstered to a sitting posture. Harry, with the impulsiveness of his years, judged that now was the time of all times to warn him of the coming danger.

"William!"

"Well, Hal!"

"Oh, William, you're in danger! Heaven help us both, and those at home!"

"What do you mean?" feebly asked the other. "I'm doing pretty well, don't you think?"

"Oh, it's not this at all—it's something else!"

"Well, then, what else?"

"Oh, William, remember Mary's warning—*some one is going that means you harm!* That some one is here!"

"Do you mean the fool that stabbed me? Bah! Don't trouble your head about him, Hal!"

"But I don't mean him at all—at least, not him alone!"

"You don't? Then who is it?" asked the other with considerable interest for him.

Harry faltered. His heart failed him. His opportunity was gone, never to be recalled.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CONCENTRATION AND PREPARATION.

WHAT a thrilling sight greeted the convalescent young soldier as he once more came on deck, leaning on Harry's arm. During the time he had been below a succession of baffling winds had hindered the voyage, the ships making but indifferent progress. William was still weak, but the boys clustered around him, while expressions of joy and sympathy were heard on all sides. But his eyes were not on them, but on the sea. The fleet, which during the first part of the voyage had become considerably scattered, was now sailing close together. The land was looming up before them. It was a beautiful day. The sun poured down its genial warmth on the deck as the two young men seating themselves on a box sheltered from the wind, gazed alternately from the ships which, like things of beauty, clove the waves, to the snow-capped hills towards which they were plunging.

"O Hal, this is grand!"

Harry's face lighted up with joy. "Yes," he replied, "it is grand: it is beautiful: we will soon be ashore."

"I feel strong already! I do believe I could shoulder a musket now if I had one!"

Harry laughed.

"See there, Hal, look at that!" and he pointed towards the precipitous cliffs yet white with snow; "did you ever see anything like that?"

"Grand!" responded his friend with enthusiasm, "why, grand is no word for it. Look where the snow is curled over yonder point! We never saw anything like that in Woodside, did we?"

"I should think not, nor are we ever likely to."

The two friends kept up a running commentary on the scene until the ships rounding the cape dropped anchor close to the land. Then was the wild frenzy of the hour. Every ship was alive with men. The excitement of the moment was so bewildering that William, weak as he was from his wound, staggered to his feet as, amidst deafening shouts, the anchors plunged into the sea, while the white canvas, as by magic, disappeared under the manipulations of the sailors. The landing of the troops was begun almost immediately. The New Hampshire volunteers, numbering three hundred men, led by Colonels Moore and Vaughan, were soon safe upon the bleak shores of Isl Royale. How grandly they looked as they formed there on the beach, their banner flung gaily to the breeze with the inspiring legend inscribed on its silken folds:

"*Nil desperandum, Christo duce!*"*

It was a great trial to William that he had to remain on board ship, as he was considered as yet too weak to land with his comrades. Harry was permitted, by per-

* This motto was given to Gen. Pepperell by the celebrated preacher, George Whitefield.

sonally appealing to Colonel Moore, to remain with him, and so the time passed as pleasantly as could be expected, the two friends, eagerly watching their companions on shore busily engaged in erecting temporary quarters or drilling in squads here and there on the bare spaces of ground.

William had, as might be expected from his nature, paid but little attention to Harry's agonized caution as to the danger hovering over him. He had, however, somehow been thinking of it a good deal this afternoon as they sat together muffled up on deck. A detachment was drilling right before their eyes, so close that they could hear every word of command.

The young men were so intent on watching the manœuvres of their comrades as to prevent much conversation, till at last William startled his friend by abruptly asking, "Is mine enemy in that squad, Hall? My other enemy, you know, not the general or corporal fellow."

Taken aback by the suddenness of the question, Harry replied without thought, "Yes, he is there, right before you."

The squad was small, and William could see there was not a Woodside man among them. "Then I am glad this mysterious wretch, whoever he is, does not belong to our own company. The fact is, Hal, the more I think of this affair, the more convinced I am that both you and dear little Mary are unduly alarmed over nothing."

"Would to heaven we were," was the solemn reply.

"Look here, now, Hal, who in that squad can have anything against me? I don't think I have spoken a dozen words to one of them. If I have an enemy among the boys it must only be the coward who has laid me aside here."

"Did I say he was in that squad? Well, I didn't mean just that. I said he was right before your eyes."

William was about to reply when the appealing blast of the bugle burst out upon the air, and the men came rushing together, till the whole of the brave little army was in line before them. William had no more thoughts for his enemy.

"O Hal, how grand! I can't stand this; I'll go ashore to-morrow, say what they will." He had his wish gratified on the next day easier than he had expected. His cowardly assailant, who had ever since the attack been kept in close confinement on board the ship, was to be tried by court-martial on shore. The surgeon judged William to be out of danger, and he was accordingly ordered with Harry into the boat. The trial was soon over, and, to the surprise of all, and the indignation of many, Waterman was discharged. It was whispered among the men that the decision was arrived at through the earnest entreaty of one of the officers—which one it was not known. William cared little, if anything, about it. He was getting strong rapidly, and in the eyes of his comrades he was the first hero of the war. He was accordingly considerably lionized, while his assailant was greeted with jeers whenever he appeared among them.

On the first day of April, the Massachusetts troops arrived, numbering three thousand two hundred and fifty men, and were followed in a few days by those of Connecticut to the number of five hundred. The Massachusetts division was made up of eight regiments, under the commands respectively of Colonels Bradstreet, Waldo, Dwight, Moulton, Willard, Hall, Richmond, and Gorham. The entire force now on the enemy's soil was nigh unto five thousand men all told. It was expected that the fleet under Commodore Warren would be waiting for them at Canso, but upon his arrival Pepperell, to his dismay, found himself alone and without the expected co-operation. Nothing daunted, however, he entered with energy

upon the important task of drilling his army, having determined to entrench himself here and await developments. For this purpose the men were set to work felling timber, which they well knew how to do, so that by the middle of April a blockhouse mounting eight guns was completed.

In the meantime the armed cruisers which had been despatched to reconnoitre in the neighborhood of the great stronghold returned, reporting that not only the harbour of Louisburg but the entire surrounding sea coast was so completely blocked with ice as to render any movement against the position for the present impossible. But the men were not idle. A detatchment under Col. Moulton penetrated into the country to St. Peters, where the settlement was ravished, the fort destroyed, and a few prisoners taken. Harry, to his great delight, was detailed for this marauding expedition, but had to go without William, whose protestations that he was as strong as ever went unheeded.

On the morning of the 23rd, cheer after cheer brought every man to the shore, where, to the inexpressible joy of all, the ships of Warren's squadron dropped anchor in the harbor. Almost simultaneously with their arrival a cruiser sailed in with the welcome news that the ice-jam had broken, and the entrance to Louisburg was clear. The army was intoxicated with excitement. Rumors of every description were in the air. The men knew all about it, so each one thought, as he eagerly retailed the latest bit of camp gossip. All these flying reports, however, at length took definite shape when, on the following Sunday morning, the 29th day of April, every man found himself on board, and the mighty fleet with majestic sweep sailed out upon the heaving sea, each ship with prow defiantly pointed in the direction of the doomed city.

CHAPTER XXVII.

NEWS, STARTLING, STRANGE, BUT TRUE!

"How are you this morning, Mrs. Farley; how are you this morning?"

It was the cheery voice of her dear old pastor.

"Middlin', thank yew, sir, an' thank th' Lord. I've no feelin' but thanks in me heart t' him! Yer well yerself, sir, air yew?"

"Yes, thank you kindly. I too am full of thankfulness to the Giver of all good!"

He took the proffered chair, and, seating himself, asked her if she had heard from the boys? Yes, Harry had written to her saying that William wasn't well; but it was a short letter. She didn't know what could be the matter with the boy, he was always so healthy at home; but she supposed them parts were different.

The good old minister listened to her uneasily as she thus rattled along. A cruiser had returned from Canso bringing a great many letters, among them one from Chaplain McDonald to himself, and, as it contained some news about William, he had come over to tell her about it. Then, in gentle tones, he gradually broke to the astounded mother what our readers already know, not forgetting, however, to speak particularly about the boy's rapid recovery, which last he especially dwelt upon as an evidence of the favor of God, who had foreordained all things whatsoever cometh to pass. Mrs. Farley sat motionless and dumb through it all.

She felt as if her tears were dried up, and to speak, what could she say? The minister drew the letter out of

his pocket, and, after a few words of comfort, proceeded to read it aloud. It ran as follows:

"Camp at Canso, April 18th, 1745.

"Reverend and Beloved Mr. Fenwick:

"Thinking that you would wish to be informed of the progress of the Lord's army as it goes up against the idolator, I sit down this morning and take pen in hand. After a rather boisterous voyage we arrived here about a week ago, He who holdeth the winds in His fist and the waves in the hollow of His hand, having been, as of old, with His own people, as they go forth to His help against the Mighty. My heart longs for the hour when mine eyes shall behold His victory over the idolatrous city, and when with these mine hands I may be permitted to hew, after the manner of Agag, the graven images which are an abomination in His sight. Pray for me that in the day of battle I may, like the one of old, hew them to pieces.

"Nothing worthy of special mention has occurred since we left home, save an accident (if such it may be called speaking after the manner of men, seeing that He foreordains whatsoever cometh to pass) that befell one of our young men, the noble William Farley of your own village. A son of Belial, evidently a child of wrath given over from all eternity to a reprobate mind, made a violent assault on our young friend, wounding him with a knife in the side. But the Disposer of all events so ordered it that the wound should be slight, so that the lad is in a fair way of recovery. Indeed, I may say he has already recovered. There is little open wickedness among the men, as becometh the Lord's chosen, so this sad affair has caused no small stir among us. * * * I commend unto you as unto a father in the gospel the beloved flock I left behind me in Harmony. Truly they are as sheep without a shepherd. * * *

"Yours in the bonds of peace,

"Donald McDonald,

"Chaplain."

"Mr. Fenwick!"

The minister started.

"Mr. Fenwick, me boy'll never cum back t' me alive! I've felt it fur days!"

"If it is the purpose of God that the lad should not return, he will not return! But if in the eternal councils it was decreed otherwise, have no fears! Not a hair of his head will be hurt if it has been foreordained to the contrary!"

"Yew kno', sir, what we heerd Mary a-sayin', in her sickness?"

"Yes."

"Well, she told me more'n she told eny wan."

"What did she tell you?" was the eager enquiry.

"'Nough t' show that she knows more'n she'll tell!"

"What can it all mean?" mused the aged man, speaking aloud to himself. "What can it all mean?"

"It meens jest this: Sum wan's in th' army ez is in love with Mary, an' hez threatened William afore her!"

Mr. Fenwick rose to his feet in blank amazement. "Mrs. Farley, Mrs. Farley, don't say that! Impossible! Absurd! It can't be so; no, it can't be so! Who could it be? No one here; not a man of them, old or young, but I have known since their infancy. Not one of them would lay a finger on the boy—not one of them!"

"An' yet yew see it's ben dun!"

He hadn't thought of that. How strange he hadn't thought of that? How strange the chaplain hadn't mentioned the man's name? He would write immediately; but no, he would go and see Mary herself, tell her all, and peremptorily—yes, peremptorily demand her secret; and, grasping his hat, he was making for the door when stopped by Mrs. Farley:

"Heer's Mary herself an' her father, neow!"

The same instant the door opened and both entered. One look told all. She had heard the news as well as themselves. They all sat down in silence. Poor Abijah looked more heart-broken than ever, as casting his eyes upon

the floor he sat like one in a dream. He had been at his old "thinkin' an' athinkin'" that morning about the decrees, and it had done him as usual no good.

The minister rose and advanced towards them. Not a word had been spoken. The embarrassment was growing awkward when at last Mr. Fenwick spoke:

"We are all friends here—brothers and sisters in trouble. Let there be no secrets between us!"

Nothing was said in reply, when, determined to bring matters to an issue, he exclaimed almost in desperation:

"Mary Oliver, who is it that is William's enemy in the army? We have a right to know. His heart-broken mother has a right to know!"

"Oh, sir, why do you ask such a question? Who could have told you this?"

"Why do I ask? Haven't you heard the news?"

"Alas, yes!"

"Is this ruffian, whoever he may be, the enemy?"

"He is not!"

"No?"

"No!"

"How do you know that?"

"Harry has written to me; I have his letter in my pocket."

"Has this murderous man any acquaintance with William's enemy?"

"I don't know, sir."

"You don't know? Will you at least tell me, your minister, who this mysterious enemy is?"

"Oh, sir, I cannot; indeed, I cannot. I dare not! Spare me, Mr. Fenwick, spare me!" and the girl burst into a fit of hysterical weeping.

"One word at least," persisted the minister, "do I know him?"

She stopped sobbing, hesitated a moment as if at a loss what to reply.

"You do, sir!" she at last managed to say. "I can answer no more. I dare not! It would do more harm than good. Oh, sir, you don't know—you cannot know how much harm!"

Mr. Fenwick sat down, and folding his hands on the top of his staff bowed his head thereon. There was something here which passed his comprehension. "I know him," he mused. It mocked him while it led him on. "I know the man who would destroy the boy! I know him and yet don't know him! What madness is here. What can I do? May power from on high assist me!" and he groaned in utter helplessness.

It never occurred to the dear old man now for one moment, that if the Power from on high had foreordained all this mystery which baffled while it mocked him, the Power from on high was not going to permit him to interfere with it. As in all the great crises of his life, he found his cast-iron creed a broken reed on which to lean. In theory it soothed him, in practice he flung it to the winds.

"We cum over t' be atellin' on yew, but ez yew kno' all abeout it we may ez well be agoin'. Cum Mary!" and they were gone.

The door closed behind them, but the minister did not move. He was overwhelmed with fear, doubt, and anxiety. In the long course of his life, knowing sorrow himself and meeting difficulties on every side, he had never been brought face to face before with that which so completely defied and baffled him and set him at nought. The deacon came in from the field; but the bowed head remained bowed. At a sign from his wife they both passed quietly out into the back kitchen, where she gently broke to him the news. When they came back, he was gone.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

GOOD INTENTIONS.

THE Rev. Mr. Fenwick had started for home full of good intentions. His loving heart had fondly imagined that he had hit upon a plan that would bring about a solution of the mystery which was hanging over his friends, or failing in that, would at least give him a clew which he might be able successfully to follow up. He had, as already remarked, himself known the "sweet uses of adversity." In the vigor of his strong manhood the partner of his bosom had been taken away from him. His only child, on whom he doted, had early followed the mother into the "silent land," and those long years he had gone in and out among his people, but with one aim, one object in life—their present happiness in the light of their eternal good. To him there was naught else in earth worth living for. Simple as a child and affectionate as a woman, he doubted none, but loved all. Strange inconsistency of the human heart! He believed as firmly in the doctrines as he believed in God; yet it had never once occurred to him that any of his own flock were among those whom God had "foreordained to everlasting death." So far as he was concerned, he both believed and acted on the belief, that his rustic followers were "by the decrees of God, for the manifestation of His glory, predestinated into everlasting life." Those who were passed by and ordained "to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice," belonged to some other man's flock, not his. Unused to the ways of the world in all that may be considered purely worldly,

he lived in the pure atmosphere of benevolence, nor could he bring himself to believe that what he saw on the surface was not the reflection of what he could not see. Hence as he always saw the best side of man's character, he was as completely deceived as if he had repudiated with scorn the doctrine of total depravity. With an abiding faith in God and the decrees, he believed that all things would work together for good to those who loved Him. He loved Him himself, and whatsoever had come to him of apparent evil had worked for his present and prospective good. Of that he was certain. Of this he had no doubt—never had the shadow of a doubt. What had been true in his own experience would also be true in the experience of others. Of this he was also certain.

It was with such reflections as these that he hastened towards his home from Deacon Farley's, full of a hope that he firmly believed had come to him there as an inspiration from on high.

How often is it that our best intentions are frustrated by the narrowness of the vision with which we view them. How have our best laid schemes but precipitated the evil we had struggled to avoid. Life is an enigma to aught save the eye of faith. Who shall say that when in the darkness of our ignorance we do those things we thought for the best, but which proved after all for the worst, who shall say that the Father who readeth the heart will sit in judgment on the act, and forget the motive behind it? We would lose faith in the unchangeable goodness of an all-wise and over-ruling Power, did we think so—could we think so. Considered apart from the eternal love that yearns towards us, we would be the victims of gigantic gorgons of evil malignity, revelling in blood and disporting in tears. Who could live and have no ray of hope that the balances of life would one day be ad-

justed? We rush along blindly through devious ways, or grope in gloom through blinding tempests of temptation. Through eyes bedimmed with tears we see an opening into green pastures beyond. Through the inviting portal catch we not the sheen of the shining ones who, having entered, found rest for their bleeding feet. We enter, when lo, the illusion vanishes. Like the deceitful mirage of the desert it flies before us. When nearest it is farthest! We follow on in the frenzy of despair. In deep depths we sink. All the waves and the billows are over us. We perish! And yet the motive which led us on was a good one.

When Mr. Fenwick arrived home he hastened up stairs to his study to put into immediate execution what his fond heart assured him would either avert the threatened danger or at least lead to a solution of the mystery which had settled over his dearest friend. Seated at his desk he was soon busily engaged in writing. He was old, and the pen moved not as briskly as of yore, but his heart was in his labor of love and he toiled on till all was finished. He had just got through his laborious work when his housekeeper tapped softly at the study door:

"I didn't like t' disturb yew, sir, but seein' Deeken Farley's ben in the sittin' room neigh onto an hour, an' looks so cast deown like, I thort as p'rhaps you'd see him!"

"See him! Oh, dear me, yes. Why didn't you tell me before. Send him up at once."

The fact was that the kindly old woman had lived so long with the minister that she knew what his every look and action meant. She had seen him come home from Farley's, heard him clamber up stairs to the study, and knew as well as if he had told her that something terrible was at work in his mind.

"Show him up stairs, Sarah; show him up. Dear me, why did you not do so before?"

When the deacon entered the minister rose, amazed at the pale, careworn face of the man. Once only had he seen such a look on him, when years ago he had come into the study after a sleepless night caused by his boy's lapse of faith in the doctrines. But it was scarcely the same look. Then it was the look of the patriarch about to sacrifice his son at the bidding of God. A terrible look—a look never to be forgotten by him who saw it. A "though-thou-slay-me-yet-will-I-trust-in-thee" look! Now, it was the look of despair, agony, love, all mingled in one, with none predominating.

"You must try and bear it as well as you can, deacon, 'looking unto Jesus,'" the minister at last managed to say as they both sat down. The deacon groaned aloud. How could he look unto Jesus and find consolation or hope, while he believed with all his heart, and soul, and mind that this same Jesus had foreordained and brought to pass all the trouble that had burst upon his family like an enveloped thunderbolt? For a brief time he had looked unto Jesus, but he had been meditating since and saw the absurdity of it all. Now he could not look. How could he? Let him answer who can! The stern expression was gone; for, as he passed through the fiery furnace of trial, the doctrines had failed to comfort or sustain. The fearful weight of anxiety and suspense of the last few days had bowed him down to the earth a crushed and wounded man; while the appalling conviction, that whatever danger was threatening his beloved boy, had been decreed by Almighty God, made his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth when he essayed to pray that it might be averted. He pray, forsooth, that the eternal purposes might be changed! It was blasphemy to think of the like

"We thought," he managed after a time to say, "we thought it strange that you left without a word, so I came over."

The minister pointed to his table and the sealed letters lying thereon, remarking as he did so, "Cheer up now, deacon, cheer up. I have hit on a plan to discover a clew to this mystery. When you go home tell your good wife to cheer up too. You have *her* left, deacon, even if anything should happen the boy, and that is more than your old pastor has."

Farley was touched to the quick as, lifting his eyes, he saw the tears streaming down the minister's face. He said nothing, however, for his heart was too full for words. Rising slowly he grasped his pastor's hand and was gone.

Alone again, Mr. Fenwick fell upon his knees by the table, and there was the wrestling of a mighty man with his God.

That evening after supper he was taking down his hat from its accustomed peg, when the housekeeper, as was her wont, remonstrated:

"Whar be yew goin', sir, ef I may be so bold? Yew look tew tired-like an' worn t' be agoin' eout."

"Oh well, Sarah, never you mind. I am stronger than you think," and the dear old man laughed cheerily as he began shuffling about the room for his staff. It was nowhere to be found. "Why, I put it right here in the corner when I came in. Did you see it, Sarah?"

"See what, sir?" replied the housekeeper, pretending she was too busy clearing away the table to notice his search.

"Why, I put my stick right here, and it's gone. I can't find it anywhere."

He shuffled round the room for a few minutes longer, and at last sat down, bursting into a peal of laughter:

"Oho, I see how it is. You have hidden it, Sarah; you have hidden it."

There was no denying the charge, and in the midst of much merriment, which by the way was nothing unusual between the two, the stick was brought out of its hiding-place.

"Thar neow 'tis ; but I sorter think yew oughten t' go eout."

"Oh, never mind, Sarah ; never mind. I'm not going far this time. I am only going to look in at Widow Walker's and enquire about the little one. You know the little fellow hasn't been very well for a day or two, and poor woman, she feels badly enough with her boy away in the war."

The housekeeper's eyes were full of tears as she closed the door after him, and then went to the window and watched the loved form as he trudged wearily down the street :

"The Lord spare him t' us," she soliloquized ; "the Lord spare him t' us a little longer. But I have me fears. These orful times are tryin' him, I ken see only tew well."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE EMBARKATION.

As the mighty fleet sailed out proudly from Canso that glorious Sunday morning in April, and the stately squadron turned defiantly in the direction of Louisburg, divine service was held on board every ship. How grandly poured forth over the sparkling waves that

volume of praise to the God of battles who giveth the victory! Each heart was filled with reverence. Then in solemn tones was read:

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever.

"O give thanks unto the God of gods: for His mercy endureth forever.

"To Him who alone doeth great wonders: for His mercy endureth forever."

The blessing of the Lord God of Sabaoth was then implored upon their enterprise, while in lowly penitence their sins were confessed and deplored. The sermons which followed had all but a common theme—the glory of Jehovah (except Chaplain McDonald's, who breathed out blood-curdling threats against the images of Rome); His presence with His people; His promise of victory to the obedient. What a preparation was here for the coming conflict! The simple-hearted men were of one mind and of one accord—they believed in God. No apostle of protoplasm had as yet appeared as the herald of a "gospel of dirt" among those primitive children of New England. They laid hold upon eternal verities with a childlike simplicity of faith, which in these our days would be as astounding to us as modern scepticism would be astounding to them had they known of it. Their theology was hard, cruel, merciless in its logic; but in defiance of it all grew up saintly characters.

After service the men scattered themselves about the deck in groups, some reading their Bibles, others chatting in low tones about the loved ones they had left behind, but all reverent and devout, as became the sanctity of the day. William, who was now completely restored to health, was seated on a coil of rope with his back against a gun-carriage. Harry was stretched at full length at

his feet. The mother's last gift, the little Testament she had put in his box the night before their departure, was open in William's hand. He had been reading it, not in a perfunctory way as a duty the sooner got through with the better, but drinking from its hallowed depths the refreshing waters to his soul. He had lost his wonted gaiety within the last few days, and there was upon his face a look of subdued anguish which he strove in vain to hide from the loving eye of his friend. They had each written long letters home during the week, and now, as their gallant bark plunged onward through the waves, they realized as they had never had since leaving home, that the stern actualities of the campaign were full upon them. Lying before him Harry scanned his comrade's face with his soul in his eyes. He loved him—not any more for Mary's sake than for his own. Their hearts were knit together by long years of affectionate intercourse. To Harry, William had always been counsellor through all the mysteries of their boy-life, and it was with feelings akin to awe that he now comprehended that this relationship had been suddenly changed—that he was now to act as guardian and protector of one who up to a few weeks had been his own director in everything. It came upon him this morning, lying here on the deck, like a revelation. That *he* could counsel William! Why he had never in all his life done anything without first consulting *him*. And now all this was to be changed. He almost rebelled against the cruel fate that had so ruthlessly came in upon them. Not that he felt like wavering. O, no: he would follow his friend to the death if need be; he would die willingly if thereby he could save his comrade. How noble William looked, he thought, as he sat there pondering the holy words he was reading! A shade paler it may be, but brave and hand-

some. He wished Mary could see him now, and thus musing in his heart the innocent boy gazed lovingly up in his companion's face.

"What are you thinking about, Hal?" questioned the other as at last their eyes met.

"What are *you* thinking about, William?"

"I would not like to tell you."

"Nor I you."

"Were you thinking about me, Hal?" after a pause.

"Yes," was the reply.

"And I about you."

They relapsed again into silence. Harry noticed his friend's face twitch nervously as he gazed dreamily up toward the sky, shading his eyes from the garish rays of the sun.

"Harry!"

"Yes, William."

"If it were not for mother and father, and—and, perhaps *you*, I would pray God to let me die on the field of battle!"

The boy sprang to his feet as if shot to the heart, and stood quivering in every limb and muscle, staring wildly at his companion. The sharp call to dinner rang through the ship, and William, turning away from the paralyzed youth, fell into line with the rest who came crowding up from the hold, out from the forecastle, and from every sunny nook on the deck, eager for the mid-day meal.

The huge squadron swung onward through the sea. It was fully anticipated by Pepperrell and Warren that they would not only be able to anchor in Gabarus Bay during the night, but also effect a landing under cover of darkness, and advance immediately upon Louisburg, only about a league distant. But to the dismay of all on board, as the sun went down the light breeze which had wafted

them steadily onwards during the day entirely died away, till every sail hung flapping at the mast. It was a bitter disappointment, but the brave fellows bore it right patiently. As night drew her sable curtains around them, the scene was weirdly grand and picturesque. The sea was dotted with the becalmed hulks of the ships, and as every inch of canvas was set, they looked in their motionless silence like spectres from another world. The dark, fir-clad hills on the shore frowned ominously, as if in wrath at the dread apparition before them. Far off from some distant ship could be heard, borne over the waters, the rich tones of some brave New England lad as he sang a verse of a hymn. Then silence as of the dead.

CHAPTER XXX.

INSIDE THE WALLS.

As the New England fleet lies becalmed yonder upon the sea, while the prayer of faith and song of praise are going up to God, a different scene is being enacted here inside the walls of Louisburg. A brilliant company is gathered in the spacious apartments of Duchambon. All the officers of the garrison are present. Gaily dressed ladies are in attendance. The room is radiant with "fair women and brave men." The crash of martial music, the whirling of the dancers, the gorgeous uniforms of the military, the rich attire of the ladies, make up a scene of almost Oriental splendor. Moving calmly about among his guests, with the graceful politeness of his nation, the Governor looks admiringly on the animated throng before

him. Conscious of his own inferiority to his predecessor (the lamented Duquesnal), and long irritated by the open insubordination of the garrison, he felt no small degree of pleasure in seeing around him to-night, and enjoying his hospitality, those whose fidelity to his person he had many reasons to suspect. With little military or administrative ability, he had all the Frenchman's traditional love of glory and display. He desired, above all things, to be popular with those over whom he was called to rule; but he lacked that subtle, personal power to win and hold the attachment of his people. All through the dreary months of winter had he been kept in a continual fever of excitement, owing to the mutinous disposition of his troops. The loyalty of some of his principal officers was more than doubtful. On the whole, his position had been the reverse of enviable. Away from his beloved France, exposed to the rigors of a northern climate, and living in hourly peril of his life in the midst of an insubordinate garrison, he hailed with delight the returning breath of spring, when the fresh arrivals from beyond the sea would break the monotony of months, and perchance open up some way of escape from the difficulties of his position. All his previous efforts to ingratiate himself with the great majority of his officers had been more or less failures. Some trusty ones had stood by him from the first, but they were few; the greater number were coldly polite or openly insulting. He had to bear it all and make the best of it. It is not much to be wondered at, then, if on this Sunday evening his eye brightened as he gazed around upon the beaming faces of his guests, and realized that there was not an officer absent who was off duty. Advancing to a group of ladies, he saluted them with the courteous formality of the age and the gracefulness of a Frenchman.

"Ah, Mademoiselle d'Hautefort," he said, bowing graciously as he addressed a beautiful girl just blooming into womanhood, "I am so pleased to see you here to-night. It is well for me that I am married and growing old."

"Why, your Excellency?" queried the blushing maiden, painfully embarrassed and scarce knowing what she was saying.

"Because, mademoiselle, your eyes would make sad havoc with my heart! Let the young officers beware," he continued, not heeding her confusion but adding to it. "By the way, who is the favored one?"

"O, your Excellency!" stammered the young lady, utterly confused.

His compliments were not empty ones. Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, the only daughter of a captain of artillery then present, was as good as she was beautiful—the idol of her parents, the pet of the garrison. Scarce sixteen, she had passed several years in Louisburg, where she had been carefully trained by the good nuns of the convent, who divided their time between nursing the sick and teaching the young. Many had been the admiring glances bestowed upon the charming little woman by the unmarried officers during the last few months; but never more so than to-night, when she stood here in blushing confusion beside the Governor of the city. Bowing again with a beaming smile, Duchambon passed on to speak to her father who, standing with folded arms across his breast, was pensively watching the dancers. The Governor's place was instantly taken by a young lieutenant of infantry, Henri d'Effiat, who begged of Mademoiselle d'Hautefort the honor of the next dance. The request was blushingly granted, and as they stood awaiting their turn, d'Effiat rather bluntly enquired what the

Governor had been saying to her. It was a stupid question, unworthy of a Frenchman, for it only added to the girl's confusion as, abashed, she dropped her eyes to the floor. The hot blood of the fiery youth tinged his face as he glanced defiance in the direction of Duchambon.

"O, Monsieur d'Effiat," ejaculated the girl as, with the unerring instinct of a woman, she read his thoughts as she ventured to raise her eyes, "you must not mistake; his Excellency was only flattering me, and you know," she added with a charming *naivete* that went straight to the man's heart, "you know I am not much used to gentlemen."

"Pardon, mademoiselle, pardon: I confess if that was all, the old Governor does honor to his judgment."

A minute after they were whirling through the dizzy mazes of the dance. Madly, blindly in love with his beautiful partner, d'Effiat never had had an opportunity of addressing more than a passing remark to her before. Her father watched the young couple uneasily. The lieutenant was no favorite in the garrison, and d'Hautefort loved his child with such passionate tenderness that he had carefully prevented all intercourse with his brother officers. When the music ceased and the dancers were retiring from the floor, d'Hautefort advanced towards his daughter and, taking her arm within his own, without as much as a glance at d'Effiat, led her away to the opposite end of the appartment.

"Marie, my child, Lieutenant d'Effiat is not a fit partner for you! Do not dance with him again. Come, I will conduct you to your mother."

Having done so, d'Hautefort took up his position as before, this time, however, entering into conversation with some officers near him, when suddenly he was confronted by the outraged d'Effiat, livid with passion.

"Am I to understand, Captain d'Hautefort—am I to understand by your conduct that you consider me unfit company for mademoiselle?

"You are to understand, lieutenant, just what you please," was the calm reply.

"Then, I understand—I am pleased to understand—you honor me with a challenge?" was the rejoinder, hissed through his teeth with a sardonic smile.

"I am at your command, Lieut. d'Effiat."

"When, captain?"

"When you please, Monsieur."

"Then—now!"

The captain bowed profoundly and, saluting each other with the politeness of the time, the two officers, followed by their friends, leisurely strolled from the room. So quietly was everything arranged between them that they attracted no attention whatever from the rest of the company.

On emerging into the open air the combatants immediately chose their seconds and weapons, d'Effiat preferring to fight with the sword. Proceeding along the wall, the party descended to the glacis on the side facing the sea. It was soon over; d'Hautefort fell—ran through the body, expiring almost instantly, with his darling Marie's name upon his lips! The lieutenant returned immediately to the ballroom, and, with the *sang froid* of a fiend, advanced to the side of her whose father's blood was yet dripping from his sword in its scabbard.

"Pardon, Madame d'Hautefort," he exclaimed, bowing low to the mother, "mademoiselle will honor me with the next dance!"

"You will have to get her father's consent, Monsieur d'Effiat."

"I have his consent, madame," again bowing low. "Monsieur d'Hautefort will not now object!"

He led the reluctant Marie on to the floor.

It was long past midnight. When the gaiety was at its height, the brilliant company was startled by the hurried entrance of the aged Abbe de Gondi, whose usually placid and benevolent face was flushed with excitement. Advancing, as rapidly as his flowing robes would permit, toward the Governor, the music stopped, the dancers stood motionless, every eye was turned after the priest, who, in a low voice, inaudible save to those immediately near him, conveyed to Duchambon the news of d'Hautefort's death. The Governor rose excitedly, and as the whole company by a common impulse pressed toward him, a wild, piercing shriek rang through the hall like the wail of a lost soul! Marie d'Hautefort fell senseless at d'Effiat's feet. Seeing what was coming, he had with cool malignity whispered that her father was dead—that he had himself killed him!

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE ALARM.

THE brilliantly-lighted apartments of an hour ago are in darkness. The exhausted revellers of the night are wrapped in slumber as profound as if the tragic termination of the ball had been a prearranged part of the entertainment. The streets are deserted. No sound is heard save the steady tramp of the sentinels on the ramparts, and the low moanings of the waves which have never ceased their cry. The dark form of some officer who perchance had tarried to swear eternal fealty in the

ear of a fair partner may be seen walking rapidly to his quarters under cover of the walls, and then all is quiet. The first faint streak of day is in the sky. The lone sentry, pacing the parapet down where the wild waves dash up over the stones at his feet with mournful wails, looks out far off over the dark sea, for his thoughts are away beyond the ocean this morning, and he roams in fancy the green fields of his beloved France. The sky brightens, but his eyes, which are dim with the tears which memory has evoked, see nothing as yet on the wave. He turns and passes slowly and wearily along the wall, drawing the cape of his great coat more tightly around his shoulders, for the morning breeze is raw and chilling as it sings in fresh from the moaning sea. As he turns again on his heel the horizon is clearly defined. Ha! what mighty spectre of the deep have we here? The white sails of a hundred ships loom up out of the fog before him! Can they be from across the ocean from his own sweet land? His heart leaps into his throat at the thought. Tidings from home, from the old mother in the Breton hamlet he loves so well? Then another thought: What if it be an enemy? And the cry of alarm rings out on the still morning air, repeated from sentry to sentry till the sleeping city is vocal with the shout. Confusion and dismay!

Duchambon is rudely awakened from his troubled sleep by a frightened officer. The bells of the church and convent clang out over the bay. The tired officers, wrapped in lethargic slumbers after the night's carousal, rush stupidly out into the streets, aroused by the uproar. The sullen roar of the warning cannon thunders over the city, breaking away in angry echoes among the green hills beyond. The garrison is beaten to arms. The sun comes up shimmering the waves.

The sight that bursts upon the excited troops as they clamber the ramparts appals the bravest. A mighty fleet bears down defiantly upon them. Duchambon is amazed, confused, astounded. His force, even could it be relied on, he sees at a glance is unable to cope with the numbers that must swarm in the approaching squadron. The troops sullenly fall into line. Nothing can now save the city, the Governor at a glance realizes, unless he can inspire his men with a spark of that patriotism that burns in his own breast. Feeling that everything depends upon the decision of the moment, he throws his whole soul into his fiery words as he addresses the scowling line before him :

"Soldiers of France ! Frenchmen, hearken ! Yonder is the enemy of our country bearing haughtily down upon us. Nothing can save us from destruction and disgrace, but to arise like one man and fight for God and king ! An opportunity presents itself such as never fell before to soldiers of France. It is for us to forget our grievances in the presence of our common enemy and common danger, and by your chivalric deeds prove your loyalty to your king. Will you do it ? Will you be true to your colors and thus show to his Majesty that you are his loving children, ready to die in his service ? Fellow-Soldiers ! Now is your chance to atone for the past—now or never ! Will you embrace it ? Will you throw to the winds every thought but one—king and country !"

He ceased. A dead, ominous silence of a moment, and then a cheer burst from the soldiers near him. Faint and uncertain at first, but it was a cheer. Now louder, till it rang crashing along the line.

Duchambon's eye brightened, and as the cheering died away, the garrison swore to stand by their colors unto death.

With little experience in military matters, the Governor was undoubtedly loyal and determined to fight to the bitter end. It was too late for him now to regret his refusal of that proferred aid that had been made to him the preceding autumn. He must do what he could. With a small force, and needing every man that could be pressed into the service, how he cursed the fate that had deprived him of the brave and faithful d'Hautefort. He could do nothing now but release d'Effiat from arrest, determined, however, that the assassin should have hot work of it for a time.

As the greater part of the fleet swept past the fortress it became apparent to the garrison that the invaders purposed to attempt a landing in Gabarus Bay, about three miles from the ramparts. Few men could be spared to oppose them, so thought Duchambon, who had resolved to await behind his guns the shock of attack. This was bitterly denounced by some of his subordinates, who insisted that the whole force should march out with all possible expedition and destroy the enemy in their boats. Duchambon yielded, but the sight of part of the hostile fleet casting anchor in the offing, caused him to change his plans, sending out in the direction of the bay only a small force of about one hundred men, under the command of Capt. Morpang. Accompanying this force the Governor despatched Lieut. d'Effiat, with the secret hope that he might never return. Not that Duchambon objected to duelling. Not he! But he bitterly lamented the loss at this critical hour of one who was a true friend and a good soldier. To be deprived of his counsel at such a time by a man of d'Effiat's standing was to the Governor unbearable. The lieutenant was a nuisance in the garrison, always in trouble, more than once having defied Duchambon himself; therefore, he would rejoice to get him

out of the way before he would do any more harm. His Excellency never once thought, in this connection, of the beautiful girl whose rare beauty he had but the evening before admired and praised. It was no part of the code of the chivalric gallants of the day to waste tears upon orphans. Of course, the Governor regretted, and regretted deeply, that Madame d'Hautefort was a widow and the fair Marie was fatherless; but the regret sprang from a consideration of the fact that he had lost a friend and the garrison a worthy officer.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE LANDING AND THE BATTLE.

At precisely eight o'clock on this glorious spring morning, on the last day of April, the New England fleet dropped anchor in the quiet waters of Gabarus Bay. There was not a ripple on the wave. Everything was favorable to an immediate landing. A small force of the enemy had been seen hovering near the shore, and it was known on board the fleet that the disembarkation would be opposed. The first division of boats was to contain about one hundred men; and William and Harry found, to their great delight, that their company was to be included therein. Harry, ever since the extraordinary remark of his companion the preceding day, had been in a state bordering on frenzy. William had positively, and almost savagely, refused to be questioned by him as to the meaning of his mysterious words, so that the poor

lad was almost heart-broken. The boats at a given signal shot out from behind the ships, pulled in towards the shore, making a feint in the direction of White Point, in order to draw off the enemy in that direction.

"Easy, boys—easy boys, there," cautioned the officer in command; "pull easy, easy—so. Whenever I give the signal put about for your lives, and pull for yonder cove," at the same time throwing a glance over his shoulder.

"Now, we'll have war at last, thank God!" exclaimed William, in a voice so unlike his own and so full of grim earnestness, that the eyes of every man in the boat were for the moment turned upon him.

"Ho! he's the general or the corperlur!"

William had been so eager for the fray that he had not noticed, or if he had had entirely ignored, the presence of his old antagonist. He was just on the point of replying when the signal was given, and in the twinkling of an eye every boat was leaping back over the course it had come. As they again drew near the fleet, another division which had lain concealed behind the ships darted out and joined the others with a ringing cheer.

"Pull for your lives, boys—pull for your lives," yelled the officer in command.

"Ay, ay sir," and every oar bent to the stroke. The excitement had now become so intoxicating that William could only find vent for his feelings in wild shouts to the sailors to pull.

"Dew yew heer the general or the corperlur?" sneered Waterman, but he was rewarded for his impudence by a ringing slap on the face by one of the Woodside boys, who angrily exclaimed: "There's general or corperul for yew: keep quiet or I'll pitch yew overboard."

The next moment the boats grounded almost simultaneously, and with shouts and defiant yells the brave

fellows sprang into the surf and dashed for the shore. The French, completely outwitted by the ruse, had marched with desperation, under cover of the woods, towards Flat Point Cove. Their leader, Captain Morpang, a daring adventurer, saw to his dismay the English form on the beach." "The heretic dogs are already in line of battle. Forward."

The shells from the fleet, which had been thrown in a somewhat desultory manner during the landing, were now screaming incessantly through the air, falling among Morpang's men, causing great consternation and destruction. The French, however, soon debouched upon the bank where they were received with a murderous fire from the invaders, who dashed towards them at a bound. In the headlong charge William stumbled among the loose stones and fell on his face, receiving, before he could recover himself, a cowardly blow from Waterman, who howled as he passed: "Th' day's lost, boys—th' day's lost, boys—th' general or corperlur is kilt."

Harry, who saw it all, frantic with rage and excitement, levelled his piece at the fellow as he ran ahead, but was stopped by William shouting: "Don't touch the fool, Hal," and, springing to his feet, the two bounded forward.

The fight had now become general. Morpang and his men contested every inch of ground. "Harry," screamed William, as they rejoined their company on the bank, and he rested his musket on a small tree before him, "Harry, look at the French general or corperlur, as yon fool says: here goes for him," and Morpang fell shot through the heart. The French, seeing their leader fall, instantly broke in confusion for the woods, followed close by the New Englanders, who pressed hotly upon them.

"Head them off, boys; head them off," yelled Captain Allen, in his excitement using terms not altogether

military: "bag some of them, my lads; bag some of them."

The boys dashed on and into the bush, William and Harry close upon the heels of a big-bearded soldier, who, having thrown away his piece and evidently wounded, was running for his life.

"Stop there, or I'll bring you down!" roared Harry as they all stumbled together out into an open space, the fugitive not far in advance. The Frenchman, turning his head at the sound, saw the levelled musket, halted, faced about and threw up his arms. The next moment William had him by the collar.

"You great scoundrel—you big Monseer, what did you make us chase you all this way for? Answer me that!" and he gave the prisoner a shake till the poor fellow looked as if he expected nothing but death. "Back with you now," chimed in Harry, running up with the muzzle of his musket close to the captive's ear. "Back with you now, I say!" They hustled him along with laughter and cheers, the unfortunate Frenchman appearing delighted to find that his life was to be spared. A shout greeted the two lads as they emerged from the thicket driving the prisoner before them. They were instantly surrounded by an eager and curious crowd.

"Did yew ever see th' likes?" cried one.

"It's the queerest coon I ever see!" yelled another, staring with open-mouthed wonder at the captive as if he were a wild animal.

"Look at his nose!" ejaculated a third.

"An' his big beerd," screamed two or three in chorus.

"Let these mine eyes behold the idolater of Rome!" It was a solemn voice and came from some distance, and soon the pompous form of Chaplain McDonald was seen edging his way through the crowd towards the French-

man. A ring was soon formed around the bewildered prisoner, who shrunk back in alarm as the chaplain, lifting his hatchet slowly above his head with great impressiveness, exclaimed:

"With these mine hands I shall hew down the images in your idolatrous city!"

"Come, come chaplain!" exclaimed the indignant William with impatience, forgetting his rank through sympathy with the agitated Frenchman. "Come, come, chaplain, this fellow is not an image, anyway; he is real flesh and blood—a real, tangible, corporeal existence; a prisoner of war, sir, if you please!"

The reverend warrior only deigned to notice the remark with a withering look of scorn as he continued addressing the astounded foreigner. "How dare you give the Lord's glory to another in yonder town against which we go up as against the mighty? These mine hands shall smite her images and pull down her altars!" and he executed certain fantastic flourishes in the air with his hatchet to the evident trepidation of "the idolater," who momentarily expected to be brained on the spot. An officer coming up at this juncture, the Frenchman was removed from beyond the sweep of the dreadful hatchet, to his great satisfaction and relief.

The remainder of the day was occupied in burying the enemy's dead and moving their camp out of range of the guns of the city, which were now sending their shot and shell crashing down upon the shore. It was with feelings of devout thankfulness to the God of battles that the brave lads, as they threw themselves here and there on the ground to rest, realized that they had thus easily secured a base of operations within less than two miles from the renowned fortress: had driven the enemy

behind their lines with loss, while not a man of their own number had been killed.

The following morning the whole army had landed, and immediate preparations were made to advance at once upon the town.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE REVEREND MR. FENWICK AT HOME.

WHEN the Rev. Mr. Fenwick returned from his visit to the poor widow's, he was informed by his housekeeper that a message had been left for him to send any letters or parcels intended for the army immediately to Captain Allen's house, as a team was ready to start from there that night, and there must be no delay. The housekeeper had gathered up all the letters she could find and carried them over herself, afraid that it would be too late when her master returned.

"You did right, Sarah; quite right. It is just like you—always thoughtful. But come, is there nothing else we can send along with the letters?"

The good woman's heart began to tremble; for if she had a weakness in the world, that weakness centred in her larder and concentrated itself round about sundry jugs and jars, the mysterious contents of which were known only to herself.

"What else could we be sendin', sir?" she asked with evident uneasiness, and glancing instinctively toward the closet which contained her treasures.

The old pastor hastily remembered he had to look at a book on the table near by, and so managed to turn away his face in time to hide the roguish twinkle in his eye, and the broad smile which wreathed his lips. He knew the weakness of his housekeeper to a nicety, and it was a source of great merriment to him at times, although no one ever knew ought about it save himself. Having found what he wanted in the book, and after tremendous explosive blowings of his nose in the great red pocket handkerchief, he shuffled back to his chair and sat down.

"Heow's th' child, sir?" enquired Sarah by way of diversion, hoping to lead his thought away from her precious closets.

"A little better—somewhat better, I think, though it is hard to say as yet."

He paused a moment to give her time to consider. He knew her tenderness of heart better than she did herself. She had never heard of suffering that she thought she could relieve, but the attempt was finally made even if it involved a raid upon her highly-prized jars.

She had lived with him ever since the day, now nigh unto thirty years, when all that was mortal of his beloved partner had been laid in the grave. She had never been married—had never wanted to be married. Envious gossips there were who would whisper that she had been those thirty years in love with the minister himself! But they might gossip away if it did them any good; it did her no harm, for she never heard a whisper of it. She had no blood relations in the world, and her heart and soul were with her dear old pastor. If this were love, then she was in love! How to make her master comfortable, how to lighten his burdens, what to do or what to say in his sorrows—for the sorrows of his flock were his and her's both—these summed up the round of

her life, entering into the very warp and woof of her being.

"She will be all right in a moment," he used to chuckle to himself when he would come home from visiting some poor creature in the parish, and would begin to make dark and awful hints as to what could be done in the case. She never thought anything could be done; and so he would leave her alone, toddle up stairs to the study, chuckling as he went: "She'll come all right in a few minutes, dear old soul; she'll be all right in a few minutes." And she always was right in a few minutes. After he had sat looking intently at the floor for some time he ventured to remark: "I dare say William and Harry—the Lord bless the lads—I dare say they will have hard times enough of it down there, sleeping on the cold ground out of doors."

"Sleepin' on the cold groun' eout of doors!" she gasped, "hev they t' dew that?"

"O dear me, and worse than that—sleep in the mud and the rain, sleep in their wet clothes, and sleep that way whether they are sick or well."

"Oh, dear, dear; who ever heerd th' likes of that before? Heow hard it must be fur th' poor lads."

"Yes, it is hard, to be sure, it is hard. We who have our home comforts can't imagine how hard it is; and now that William has been poorly, I suppose his appetite won't be any of the best."

"Of course not," and she glanced uneasily towards the door of the closet and moved nervously in her chair. Then he dived at the book on the table again, whispering to himself, "She's coming round; yes, she is coming round faster than I thought." And after some more alarming blowing of his nose, he commenced shuffling across the room towards his stick in the corner.

"Yew'll dew no such thing. I'll take them over meself."

"Take what over, Sarah?" and his eyes twinkled more roguishly than ever.

"O, well, never yew mind. Yew go up t' the study, neow, an' lie down a bit; yer nigh tired eout."

"Well, I suppose I must obey the powers that be."

"Of coorse yew must."

Soon he was clambering up the stairs, puffing and blowing, and gasping out, "She's round—yes, she's round. She always *does* come round," and the dear old soul chuckled and made outrageous noises with the red handkerchief as he threw himself upon the lounge in his study, unable to stand with merriment. As he fell into a dose he could hear her hammering away down in the closet, and knew as well as if he saw what was going on with his eyes that she was so far "round" that an unmerciful raid was being made on the contents of her precious jugs and jars.

The letters written from the army before it had sailed from Canso were received in Woodside with great joy. Poor Mrs. Farley was beside herself at getting such a sweet long letter from her boy. True, she couldn't make much headway in reading it herself, but the father had relieved her of the trouble. William spoke lightly of his wound, assuring her he was as safe as if he were at home on the old settee by the fireplace. The letter to Mary was full of love, breathing eternal devotion. He was safe, he assured her. She was not to doubt that; for he had an abiding faith in the providence of God. "Do not, my Mary," he wrote, "do not doubt this. I feel that God is here as well as in Woodside. It has been a never-failing source of consolation to me to dwell upon this thought, that I cannot go so far away as to be beyond

the reach of His love. Do you remember what the Psalmist says: 'From the ends of the earth I will cry unto thee.' I know that He is at the ends of the earth, and that consequently he is here. We have seen rough times since we left you, and expect to see rougher; but not so rough that God cannot make them smooth if it pleases Him. This is my hope, let it be yours, my Mary. We will soon be back again and—then! The sweet thought that my mother and my Mary are praying for me never leaves me for a moment. May the Lord bless you, my darling one, and make His face to shine upon you. Never, never, doubt His love any more than you doubt the love of your faithful William."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THWARTED!

THE sailor who had brought Mary the letter, to which reference has already been made, reached his vessel just as it was ready to put to sea. Rough and uncouth in appearance though he was, this man carried a warm heart under his seaman's jacket. The marvellous beauty of Mary Oliver haunted him like a dream in the night. He could not get away from it. It would not get away from him. Her sad face rose up before him in the darkness as he stood at the wheel, and appeared to beseech him not to forget his promise.

"Thar's suthin' wrong," he would say to himself, and then he would pass his hand into his bosom where Mary's

letter was hidden, "thar's suthin' wrong!" What *was* wrong poor Jack didn't know—couldn't know. It would not stay in his mind, do what he would, that anything could be wrong with such a lovely being as he had seen and talked to. The other letter was in his chest. He had taken it out more than once to destroy it, and he would say: "She didn't want'er send it." But a second thought would show him that it might do her more harm than good were it destroyed. So he would put it back again into his chest.

"I'm sorry 'nough that I ever 'greed to dew it," and he would go to the box, take out the letter, and feel it all over for the hundredth time to see if he could make out what mischief lurked therein.

When the cruiser cast anchor in the still waters of Canso, in front of the encampment, Jack took the letter out of his chest to deliver it to its address. "Shiver me timbers, but I'll dew suthin' with it," he ejaculated, holding up the missive and then feeling it over and over again. "Lem me see, this means harm t' 'er, or she'd not hev looked so queer," and the pale, angelic face rose up before him. "I wonder ef I'll ever see the likes of her again; mebbe I will," and he went over the letter as before, holding it up to the light and feeling it between his thumb and first finger. But he could not make up his mind to destroy it. So, getting permission to go ashore, he leapt into the boat that was just starting, determined that if it cost him his life he would deliver Harry's letter into his own hand at the same time. But alas for best laid schemes! Harry had just started with the raiding party that had gone on to St. Peter's, and in a few hours the dejected sailor, with Mary's letter close to his heart, was out at sea bound for Newfoundland, whither the crusier was immediately despatched by Warren, with

peremptory orders for any British ships of war in those waters to join the expedition at Canso.

When Mary received the letters from her lover and her brother, dated the day before sailing for Louisburg, she knew that her strategem had failed, and that all that was now left her was to pray and wait. She dared not think even. Every morning she dreaded that before night some fearful tidings would reach her. Every night she shuddered lest before day she would be awakened by awful tidings of her loved ones. The weeks passed wearily, but her more than earthly beauty was only heightened by the sweet sadness of her face. The father, as was his wont, talked little to her. Why should he? he reasoned within himself. What could he do for the girl? But if her father was not much comfort, she found in Mrs. Farley more than a mother. She would come down of an afternoon and remain for hours sometimes assisting the little stricken maiden with her work, while she encouraged her with cheery words. Then the deacon would drop in and they would all sit down to talk of the boys and the war. Mrs. Farley, brave-hearted woman as she was, saw for many days back that everything was going to depend on herself. After the first paroxysm of agony had passed away, she began slowly to realize that her husband's courage, always so unflinchable before, was failing before the awful trials of those terrible days. It almost crushed her to think of it. From Abijah she had expected nothing, from Mary it was unreasonable to expect much; from her husband she had expected everything. The doctrines had unmanned him. The mysteries had taken away his fortitude. For the first few days he had been like his old self, but when he went to the fields to work he commenced meditating and saw his folly. Logically following his cast-iron creed to its legitimate conclusions, he saw on the

one hand the folly of praying to God to avert danger from his boy, while on the other hand stretched away a wilderness of desolation, unlighted by a solitary ray of hope. Whatever would befall the boy had been prearranged from all eternity, of that he had not a doubt. But the fact that God had preordained that his son should suffer trial, perhaps death, failed to mitigate the horror of the thought. He was like a man caught in the eddying swirl of the on-rushing rapids leaping toward the dread cataract. He felt all the waves and the billows surging over him, but knew it was useless to stem the current. Over into the seething maelstrom he must go! No longer could he sit erect like a moral iceberg in his straight-backed chair, with stern visage pondering the mysteries. The storm had burst upon him and crushed him to the earth. Alone his devoted wife stood with her God. Unfettered by the shackles of theology, it never entered her head that all their troubles had been foreordained by God! All she knew was that in the Book she was commanded to call upon Him in the day of trouble and He had promised to hear and to answer. And so alone she called. Alone? O, no; not alone! There was one who was ever brave, and whose words of cheer were heard above the storm. The dear old minister was ever the same. The tragedies of those days only roused him to renew his youth. To him Mrs. Farley could always go when crushed almost to the ground, and she always came away with the load lightened, if not removed. Many a time when feeling that she must fall in sheer helplessness and give up in despair as she looked upon her husband's face reflecting the desolation of his soul, the pastor's shuffling step would be heard at the door, and the sunshine of hope would stream down upon her when he entered. Thus day by day she lived on, praying and waiting—waiting and praying.

Not that the deacon forgot his devotions. He would die sooner than do that. But there was no hope in his prayers. How could there be? What right had he to have hope? On what basis could he ground a hope? If the decrees were propitious to the boy, he could thank God for having made them propitious. If they were not, could he thank God for that? What could he pray about? Not to change eternally-arranged plans; for, apart from its absurdity, such a prayer to him would be blasphemy. Could he pray to God to protect his son? How protect him? What would be the meaning of such a prayer? Protect the lad from what? The deacon was logically and terribly consistent, and so asked the Lord to do just nothing of the kind. How could he? Why should he? The councils of eternity had settled William's fate, and it would be an insult to the Infinite Majesty to pray about it!

Each day as they got through family worship Mrs. Farley remembered a time when the prayers were different. A time when there were earnest supplications that men should be made submissive to the purposes of Jehovah. A time when there were pleadings that He might work according to the councils of His will. But, O dear, there was no shadow of death hovering over their own home then, and it was an easy matter to indulge in flowing platitudes when the iron was piercing the heart of a neighbor. Then she would recall his tenderness when William had gone away first, and she had nestled her head on his shoulder as in the olden time, thanking God that he was himself again—the dear, loving husband, and not the stern, unbending deacon. But he had gone back to his meditating, and now he was away where he had been before, only worse. The sternness had given place to the listlessness of despair. And his prayers! All doctrines, and mysteries, and decrees, black as "the horror of great

darkness" that fell upon Abraham. He would go to the fields and work the whole day long, coming home as he had gone, without a word of cheer for her bleeding heart. O, it was so hard! And thus went by the hours and dragged along the days.

Thank God for His unspeakable gift to man—a true woman! What would our cursed world be to-day should all the faithful ones He has given us become like ourselves in selfishness? Woman lives but for others. Deny to her the great purpose of her nature, the all, all-controlling power that permeates every fibre of her spiritual being, and she becomes a burden to herself, if not a curse in the world. Deprive her of all incentives to love, strip her of every motive to labor for something or for somebody, and she is forthwith transformed into something more or less than human, living a life of death while she liveth.

Thank God for His unspeakable gift to man—a true woman! She bends over the little crib with unutterable yearnings; she bows above the tiny grave when the little crib is empty; but as the baptism of her tears bedews it, she remembers the living. Lifting herself out of the depths, erect she stands with the iron piercing the quivering heart. She lives, and works, and loves, and dies!

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE RECONNOISSANCE.

IMMEDIATELY upon the landing of the remainder of his force on the forenoon of the first of May, General Pepperrell determined to follow up the advantage so auspiciously gained, and advance at once upon the city. The troops were flushed with victory, and, like the skilful officer

that he was, Pepperrell saw that now was the time to give them plenty to do. True, there were few in the army who had any correct idea of what a battle really meant. They were also deficient in artillery, and the enemy yonder had over a hundred heavy guns trained upon them. Every avenue of approach to the town was defended. The veterans of old France were behind the ramparts, strengthened by nearly two thousand militia, well disciplined and accustomed to the use of arms. Pepperell's boisterous four thousand had little to aid them save brave hearts, strong bodies, and an abiding confidence in the God of battles. But was not this enough, and more than enough, to warrant the general advancing immediately upon the works? Such were the thoughts which animated the noble Pepperrell this glorious first of May, 1745. Deeply imbued with the religious instincts of his time, he felt almost like one of the leaders of old who went up against the enemies of Heaven, and went up but to conquer. As profoundly convinced in the matter of the doctrines as was ever Deacon Farley himself, unlike the deacon he did not carry them to their logical conclusions by floating passively with the stream. He believed in prayer, but trusted to hard blows. The deacon was logical, the general practical.

Having decided to advance without delay, Col. Vaughan was ordered to reconnoitre the enemy's position with the entire New Hampshire battalion, reinforced by a company of volunteers, making in all four hundred men. The colonel was left to his own discretion to act as emergencies presented themselves. The ringing commands of the officers were soon heard upon all sides.

"Fall in, boys. Fall in—fall in!"

The camp was alive in a moment and a scene of wild excitement and enthusiasm followed. It was a bitter dis-

appointment to those who had to remain behind ; but like brave fellows they bore it as best they could. The battalion formed on the beach presenting the only open space suitable for the purpose. When all was in readiness, the general advanced to the front and addressed a few words of advice, warning them not to give way to excitement, but to be steady ; and, above all, to be true to their God, their king, and their country.

"We'll be true, general, never yew fear—we'll be true!" shouted one.

"That we will, general ; let the Monseers look eout!" cried another.

Thus did those simple-hearted fellows, in blissful ignorance of the stern discipline which might have frowned down such ebullitions of feeling, keep up a running commentary of promises to the general, who smilingly looked on and listened in silence.

"Attention!"

It was the colonel's voice.

"Before the order to march is given, Chaplain McDonald will offer prayer."

Every head was bowed as the chaplain stepped out from the group of officers surrounding the general and advanced with a desperate attempt at composure. William had just time to notice before bowing his head that the hatchet this time was nowhere to be seen. The prayer was rambling, incoherent, irrelevant, and bombastic, winding up, however, with breathings of slaughter swift and sure against the idolatrous city and the "images of Rome!"

"Attention! Shoulder arms! To the right face! March!"

And with shouts and clapping of hands, waving of caps and cheers, the battalion climbed the banks and were soon lost to view in the dense woods skirting the shore.

William and Harry were shoulder to shoulder as before. The thought—the appalling thought—had been forcing itself upon Harry during the last few hours that his comrade's mind was surely giving way. From the deepest gloom he had seen him break out into the most boisterous and senseless laughter. True to the instincts of his affectionate nature he resolved to stand by his friend, never to leave him for a moment, till at least some glimmer of light should be let in on this perplexing mystery. As the battalion plunged deeper into the thicket, and commenced struggling along under the branches and over the fallen trees till sometimes they were on all-fours, William roared and shook with convulsive merriment.

"Ha! ha! ha!" he yelled as he sprang head foremost into a thicket that seemed impenetrable; "ha! ha! ha! this is grand. What's Woodside to this, Hal! What's Latin or Greek to this, old fellow? Ha! ha! ha!" Harry came running up breathless with fear and amazement.

"For mercy's sake, William, don't! Don't, William, don't!" and the now thoroughly alarmed boy gazed almost frantically into his companion's face.

"Why not, Hal? Let's yell," and the woods rang with his shout. They had emerged from the bush and were confronted by Captain Allen.

"Who was that shouting?" he asked sternly.

"I, sir," was William's instant reply.

"You?"

"Yes, sir."

"You will have an opportunity to shout by-and-bye, I have no doubt. We must now advance quietly. Keep with your company, boys."

The ground was very uneven, and this last command was by no means easy of performance. In many places deep boggy marshes had to be crossed in which the boys

sank to their knees; but the gay rollicking lads laughed and plunged and laughed again as if it was the best fun in the world. Suddenly cheers were heard far in advance, and dashing forward every man soon found himself on an open space on the hills, with the mighty fort at their feet, the ramparts swarming with the astonished garrison. What a sight was here! Before them—so near it seemed—lay the dread city towards which their hearts and minds had for those long weeks been turned. Here it was at last, resting there on its narrow neck of land, the black open-mouthed cannon frowning defiance upon every side. The great blue waves of the Atlantic stretched away interminably in the distance, till they blended with the still deeper blue of the sky. Yonder in the offing lay the great hulks of Warren's squadron blockading the harbor. The waters in the bay were calm and still as a sheet of solid silver. The sun smote the roofs of the houses with a roseate glow till they shone like burnished gold.

After the first cheer of astonishment from the men, they stood and gazed down upon the scene in silent admiration. Although within easy range of the guns, they were unmolested, the garrison contenting themselves with staring up at the strange and startling sight upon the hills.

"Three cheers, boys; three cheers, and then to cover," at last shouted Vaughan. They were given with a will, and ere the echoes had died away over the city, the last man had disappeared from view, and the green hills again wore their wonted composure. As William and Harry struck into the bush, they came suddenly upon the redoubtable chaplain on his hands and knees, crouching close to the ground behind a huge boulder of granite. Neither spoke as they looked into each other's face in silence and hurried on.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

CAPTURE OF THE GRAND BATTERY.

THE sight they had just beheld added to the enthusiasm of the invaders, and had Vaughan ordered a general assault upon the West Gate instead of three cheers, it would, no doubt, have as readily been made. Plunging through the undergrowth, the battalion marched in the rear of the Grand Battery, debouching at last upon the bank of the north-west arm of the harbor. It was now dark, but they discovered, to their great delight, several large warehouses crammed with military stores, including immense quantities of wine and brandy. It was the work of a moment! The bright leaping flames lighted up the woods and bay with a brilliant glow, casting a weirdly lurid glare over the scene. How the red tongues of fire licked the brandy casks, leaping over them like demons of the pit, whirling round them, dashing under them, hugging them in their hot embrace, encircling them with living bands of fire—madly in love with them—careering, springing, hissing as with the wild glee of hell. Let them burn!

As the fire went down the men bivouacked for the night in the edge of the woods, and each slept such sleep as only a soldier knows of.

Who can sleep as he sleeps? Who can dream such dreams? Talk not of downy pillows to the man who all day long has trudged footsore the weary march or walked unmoved in "garments rolled in blood." He wants none of them. Give him some verdant knoll on which to rest his head and the gods might envy him his slumbers. Is he imaginative—thrilled with high hopes, aspirations and desires? Let him lay him down, then, here under

the sighing pines, and they will sing to him—sing to his soul all through the night such unutterable songs that he is lifted up out of himself and carried in spirit unto regions of entrancing melody. Does he yearn for the "touch of a vanished hand"—groans he for the sound of "a voice that is still?" Lay him down here, then, on the brink of this laughing rill with yonder stone for his pillow, and the voice will speak to him in his dreams, all through the quiet hours till break of day, while the vanished hand will touch him into life in the morning.

As the first streak of light appeared in the sky the men were on the move, rubbing their eyes and feeling somewhat stiff of limb; for the early spring nights were as yet chilly, but all alive were the lads to the possibilities of the opening day, and yearning to be off.

"Hello, Hal!" exclaimed William, crawling out from under the thick branches where he had slept. "Hello, Hal! Where are you? Oh, I see. Well this is life, isn't it? This is fine—this means something! What is Woodside to this? What is Greek or Latin to this? Ha! ha! ha! How do you like it, Hal? How do you like sleeping out of doors on the damp ground, eh, old fellow?"

"I like it better than I did—I am getting used to it."

"Getting used to it? I should think so. One gets used to anything. What's that Horace says: '*Consuetudo quasi altera natura?*'"

"Horace says nothing of the kind."

"Who says it, then?"

"Cicero."

"You're right, Hal; you're right. You've got me this time; but then a fellow can't be expected to be very accurate when he is not more than half awake.

"Heow's th' general or the corperlur?" sneered a passing figure in the gray dawn.

"He's this way, fool!" and with the words on his lips, William sprang like a tiger on the retreating man, hurling him down crashing among the brush: "Have you your knife now, you villain, you coward, you liar—have you your knife now?" and with the grip of a giant he clutched his prostrate foe by the throat. "I've stood you about long enough, now—look out!" and placing his knee on Waterman's breast, the crushing blows fell like rain on the upturned face till it was a mass of blood. The man struggled desperately and tried vainly to scream; but the fingers only tightened the more firmly on his throat. They had rolled over together into a slight hollow in the ground which effectually screened them from view in the uncertain light. Harry stood above them breathlessly mute. He felt that long-delayed vengeance had come.

"Scoundrel, take that, and that, and that!" and releasing his hold, William dealt three fearful parting blows, springing backward to his feet the same instant. Harry leaped forward expecting a repetition of the cowardly stab on the ship. But there was no danger of that. The wretch was insensible, and did not move.

"Harry, look to the—the fellow, and I'll go and give myself up. I couldn't stand it any longer." A crowd had by this time gathered round, and the bruised and bleeding Waterman, having regained consciousness, was helped to his feet. William immediately reported to his captain, but was ordered back to his company to be dealt with on their return to headquarters.

After a hastily-eaten breakfast, the battalion was again on the move on the march to the camp. Arriving in the rear of the Grand Battery, the colonel called a halt, and selecting a dozen trustworthy men, among the number an Indian, he ordered the main column forward to camp, while with his small detachment he climbed cautiously to the summit of the hill to reconnoitre.

"Easy, boys, easy—don't show your heads for your lives. Let me lead."

The redoubt was now visible through the trees right at their feet, and they could see almost into every corner of it. The white flag of France was flapping in the morning breeze, but not a sign of life was to be seen.

"This is strange, certainly strange," whispered Vaughan to the man nearest him, after gazing for some minutes intently at the work, "can you make out any one?"

"Not a soul; 'pears t' me they've left."

"Aye," replied the colonel, "or the brave Monseers must have all died last night with fright."

Moving stealthily forward to get a better view, Vaughan satisfied himself that something unusual had happened. What it was, he couldn't for the life of him divine. It struck him at length that the enemy had evacuated the battery, but he banished the thought instantly as he scanned the enormons strength of the work. "Then it must be a ruse to decoy us to the attack." What should be done? As thus puzzled with uncertainty how to act, word was passed along the line to the colonel that the Indian had just signified his willingness to risk a nearer approach, and if the battery was actually deserted to enter by an embrasure and open the gate, The offer was eagerly accepted, and the Indian started. When he emerged from cover in full view of the redoubt, Vaughan and his men saw him, to their amazement, throw himself on the ground, struggle frantically, foam at the mouth, while he groaned forth most hideous shrieks and yells.

"What in the name of—of—well, of Louisburg, does the red-skin mean?" ejaculated the colonel, utterly astounded by the antics before him.

"O, let th' ole Injun alone, he knows what he's about, no doubt," replied one of the party.

"Look thar," cried another aloud, "was th' likes ever seen since the world was made?"

The Indian was now executing a mad war-dance, or something of that sort, in full view of the parapet.

"There! he's gone," exclaimed the colonel, as the fantastic figure disappeared like a flash, and was hidden from view by the uneven nature of the ground.

"Look at him now!" cried every man in chorus as the Indian was seen springing into the moat, and with the agility of his race, went clambering up the parapet and disappeared through an embrasure. A minute scarcely and the great gate of the battery was slowly swinging open, and the unearthly war-whoop floated up to the astonished men on the hills.

"It's deserted, sure enough, boys," cried Vaughan, wild with excitement; "Forward, at a bound."

The French had evacuated the position during the night. The smoke and flame of the burning warehouse at the north-east arm had been taken by them as an indication that the entire English force was marching down upon them from that direction. The guns had been hastily spiked, but were left in position. Not a carriage had been touched, and a glance showed Vaughan that every gun could be made fit for service in a few hours. The brave boys went dashing about from point to point—looking here and there in astonishment. They could not bring themselves to believe in their luck.

"Look ahere!" cried one to another, "look ahere; look at me!"

"Wal, I be alookin' at yew," was the reply.

"Tak hold on me arm, will yew?"

The other did as desired. "Thar! neow pinch—pinch hard ez yew can!"

This was done with a will, till the soldier screamed

with pain. "Thar! that'll dew; though I 'low I couldn't believe it!"

"Believe what?"

"I couldn't b'lieve what? I couldn't b'lieve I wuz awake!"

"O, yer awake fast 'nough; at least ez much awake ez yew ever wuz!"

The two burst into a roar of laughter at this sally. "The fack is," said a third, who had been looking on, "the fack is, I don't believe none of us is awake. It's tew good, this here is!"

Col. Vaughan, who was about as excited as any of them, here turned his eyes to the flag. "Down with it—down with the white rag!" he shouted. "Down with it!"

Half a dozen sprang forward. "Hold, though! The worst is, we have nothing to put in its place!"

"Sure 'nough."

"I hev it, kurnel; I hev it!" exclaimed a strapping young fellow, as he began pulling off his red jacket. "Get me a nail or tew, an' suthin' t' drive 'em!"

This was quickly done, and, taking the coat between his teeth, away he went up the pole with the agility of a squirrel. The white flag of France soon ran down in disgrace, while, amidst the cheers of the reckless fellows, the red jacket was nailed securely in its place.

It was now about nine o'clock, and Vaughan, beginning to realize the danger of his position should he be attacked from the city, sent off the brave old Indian with the laconic despatch to Pepperrell:

"By the grace of God, and the courage of thirteen men, I entered the Grand Battery about nine o'clock, and am waiting reinforcements and a flag!"

CHAPTER XXXVII.

WITHIN THE CITY.

When Morpang fell, the command of the French force opposing the landing devolved upon d'Effiat, who, as has been seen, immediately ordered a retreat upon Louisburg, burning in his way every building that might afford shelter to the invader. Duchambon watched from the ramparts his disorganized troops struggling back in confusion toward the city. He saw with dismay as they approached that their captain was missing, while the hated d'Effiat, though considerably crestfallen, was still alive and untouched. The company straggled in by the West Gate in the wildest disorder. The lieutenant advanced to the Governor to report. He reported, true enough, that the enemy had landed an overwhelming force, and that, with his small command, there was nothing for them but retreat or annihilation. Duchambon bit his lips. "How did your men behave?" he enquired after a moment's pause.

"Nobly, your Excellency; they fought admirably!"

"And the enemy?"

"The heretic dogs! They fought like tigers, swarming upon us on all sides!"

"That will do, sir!"

The lieutenant withdrew, the Governor determined that the hot-blooded duellist who had deprived the garrison of its bravest officer should have his hands full for the next few weeks.

The remains of the lamented d'Hautefort had been buried that morning in the cemetery at Point Rochefort, near the great white cross, visible from all points of the

city and harbor. The stricken women were inconsolable. Marie bowed beneath the fearful stroke. Like a flower of the oasis, scorched by the withering breath of the simoom, she drooped and faded under the awful blow that had fallen upon her. The kind old Abbé Gondi did all in his power to comfort her and the widowed mother, but with little success. They would not be comforted. On the evening of the funeral, and shortly after the defeated expedition came pouring in confusion into the fort, the good old priest sought Madame d'Hautefort's quarters. "You must leave here at once with Marie," he said kindly, but firmly, to the weeping woman as he seated himself. "You must leave here at once and take refuge in the convent with the sisters. Here you are no longer safe. This is no place for you now."

"Oh, father, it is so hard!" was the sobbing response of the widow.

"Yes, it is hard; but bow submissively to the stroke. Remember your duty to the dead," and he crossed himself reverently as he muttered a prayer for the repose of the soul of d'Hautefort. "The city will be invested by the heretics in a few days," he went on. "Our men have been driven back. You will be exposed here to the fire of the enemy, and Marie must be placed where she will be safe from the murderer of her father."

With heavy heart the widowed mother arose to prepare for immediate removal to the convent, and the kindly abbé, in order to hide the tears he felt gushing to his eyes, murmured a hasty adieu, saying as he left that he must immediately see the Governor.

"I will be round in an hour at most to escort you to the sisters," were his last words.

The abbé had just turned the angle of the street, and was making with all haste for headquarters, when he

stood face to face with Lieut. d'Effiat. The officer saluted and was passing on, when, by a gesture from the priest, he was stopped.

"Dost thou know, sir, what thou hast done?"

"I did the best I could, good father; the enemy were five to our one."

"Wretch, I speak not of that. Your hands are red with blood."

"And redder will they be, good father, before this is over—red with the blood of the heretic."

"Blood of the heretic," exclaimed the now agitated priest with emotion; "your hands are red with the blood of the faithful d'Hautefort, you have wickedly slain."

The lieutenant paused abashed. Even his well-known arrogance availed him nothing here in the presence of the holy man.

"Good father, what shall I do?" he at last managed to mutter with downcast eyes.

"Do? Do your duty! Throw yourself at the feet of the holy mother of God. Make restitution to the two women whose hearts you have broken by your foul deed! Should you die in your present state of mortal sin, you will be buried with the burial of an ass, and damned to all eternity."

At these awful words the officer uncovered his head and bowed almost to the earth, making the sign of the cross with every appearance of contrition, muttering at the same time, "Holy father, pray for me."

The abbé waved his hand, turned on his heel and proceeded briskly in the direction of the King's Bastion. D'Effiat watched the retreating figure till well out of sight, while a sardonic smile curled his proud lips: "Soul or no soul," he hissed between his teeth, "Marie will be mine or there will be more blood, nor will it be the blood of the

heretic either." Bad as he was he could not, however, nerve himself to do now what had been his purpose to do before meeting the abbe. He had resolved to throw himself at the girl's feet and declare, at all hazards, his love. It was a mad thought; but love is mad, and blind, and wild—at least such love as his. He knew nothing of the purity of that devotion which encircles the object of affection as with a garment of light.

O love, true love, what art thou and what art thou not? There is the touch of an angel's fingers at the heart, and then there is the going forth of the soul towards the idol. Pure love is of heaven—heavenly. It is not of earth. How the soul sways beneath its power. We dwell in realms of bliss. We are in the earth but not of it. Life, which perchance but yesterday was clad in black and sombre hues, to-day sparkles with a roseate glow. Ah, blest love, thou art of God—a remnant of man's deep loss. Thou art a breath from Paradise—thou art a song in the night, life's night—dark night, but for thy light.

D'Effiat passed grimly on to his quarters, and in less than an hour the fatherless girl was beyond his power.

"Dear child, sweet child!" exclaimed the abbessé meeting Marie and her mother at the door of the convent, "Holy Mary, mother of God, be good to you."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE FIRST SHOT AT THE CITY.

WHEN Gen. Pepperrell received Vaughan's despatch he could hardly believe the evidence of his senses. "What hath God wrought?" he piously exclaimed, lifting his eyes heavenward.

Brig.-Gen. Waldo, in command of the New Hampshire troops, was ordered immediately to the Grand Battery with his men, where he arrived early in the afternoon, to the great joy of Vaughan and his brave squad of thirteen. They had in the interim been attacked by armed boats from the city, which they had gallantly met on the beach and repulsed.

The strategic importance of the Grand Battery struck Waldo the moment he entered it. The guns had been but poorly spiked, and without an hour's delay, Major Pomeroy, a professional gunsmith, was busy superintending the drilling. This was continued all night by relays of men, so that early on the morning of the third May, Waldo had one gun ready trained on the town. The French, in entire ignorance of what was going on in their deserted work, were in crowds about the streets or stretched lazily on the parapet watching with characteristic *sang froid* the effect of their own desultory fire. Waldo aimed the piece himself. The distance across the harbor to the town was scarcely half a mile. Suddenly there is a roar! The loungers on the parapet stagger to their feet in the wildest confusion as the iron messenger crashes down among them, rebounding into the crowded streets below, cutting a lane as it tore along. Fourteen men lay cold and dead within the city ere the smoke of the discharge had lifted itself from the bay. It was a terrible foretaste of what was to follow.

The first Sabbath dawned upon the besiegers. It was to them a novel experience to find the sanctity of the day of rest was to be broken by the incessant crash and thud of shot and blare of shell. All the guns of the battery were now fit for use; but before opening on the town Waldo had the men beat to arms for divine worship. What a sight was here! The boys had smelt powder—

they had looked upon death. Before darkness came down upon the hills some of them might be sleeping that sleep that knows no waking. Sternly they stood in the ranks, with the brilliant sun baptizing them with a benediction from above. Each man's face was a study. Struggling emotions were at work deep down in every heart. The shot from the city fell continuously against the walls of the battery, throwing great clouds of sand and earth over them. But not a man flinched—not a muscle moved. Like veterans of a hundred battles, they stood as calm as if all this was in the ordinary course of events.

There was one, however, toward whom many eyes were turned with ill-concealed disgust. Chaplain McDonald was seen to emerge out of the bomb-proof and go shuffling along under the cover of the wall nearest the enemy. He held in one hand the Book, while the other nervously grasped the hatchet. Standing up with his back against the parapet, and glancing wildly over his shoulder with a shudder as the balls struck the earth in a shower above him, he laid the hatchet on a gun carriage and began the service. When preliminaries were ended, he announced his text: "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise." Psalm. c. 4.* He spoke in his usual incoherent and rambling style, with great swelling words of sound, with little sense and less adaptability. As the enemy's fire had slackened considerably, he waxed wild toward the close, at length grasping his hatchet with the oft-repeated declaration: "With these mine hands will I hew down the images of Rome!" A low murmur of indignation ran along the line, which the disgusted officers did not attempt to check. The chaplain had for some time been losing caste, and he was now held by all in

* The text is historically accurate.

about the same estimation as by the irrepressible smith's apprentice in his own village.

When service was over a hasty dinner was snatched, and then the guns opened a terrific fire upon the town. The cannon were served with such precision that the enemy at first, apparently amazed, maintained an ominous silence. It was the lull before the storm. Soon every gun that could be trained on the battery replied with astounding rapidity. All along the front of the town, from West Gate to Battery Island, was a sea of flame. The earth shook beneath the appalling reverberations. The calm waters of the harbor trembled as if in fear, as ever and anon they were ploughed up in seething furrows by bursting shell and shattering canister. It was an unequal contest. The besieged had at least three guns to Waldo's one, the greater number also of much heavier calibre, but the brigadier's blood was up, and so was the blood of the brave lads he handled so skilfully. Darkness settled down on the scene, but the terrible duel went on. The solid shot struck, tore, knocked—the demoniac scream of the shells roared with a bellowing howl through the air, falling with a shriek and a blare as they burst in and around the battery.

"Give it to them, boys—give it to them!" thundered Waldo, dashing from side to side. "Give it to them, boys—give it to them!"

He was answered with wild cheers and shouts and yells. The explosions were deafening. It was not gun answering gun, but half-a-dozen vomiting forth at once like a horrible volcano, till the continuous belching roar had in it something so unearthly that the bravest might well have stood appalled. At length, thoroughly exhausted by their terrific efforts, and uncertain as to the effect produced in the darkness, Waldo gave the order to cease

firing. The French kept it up for a few minutes longer, and then all was quiet. The silent stars twinkled and blinked ere long upon a scene as calm and peaceful as if, but an hour before, sea and sky and land had not been tremulous with the shock of battle. The casualties in the battery were only one killed and three wounded.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A GOOD MAN AT REST.

MARY was sitting by the little window in her chamber on the evening of the day that her loved ones, far away, were marching through the thick woods of the distant isle. She held in her hand listlessly an open letter, the last she had received from her lover. She had just answered it, and was waiting for her father to return from the village whither he had gone to enquire about the next cruiser to Louisburg. She felt that life and death were now being brought down to the narrow compass of a few days, compressed within the accidents of a few hours. How to act she knew not. That her idolized William was, perhaps, at that very moment at the mercy of one who knew neither pity, fear, nor love, was a thought so terrible to her gentle heart that she shuddered as it came upon her here afresh, shuddered till the chair shook beneath her. Her prayers died away in her throat, they would not be uttered—they were unutterable. Her faith in God never wavered for a moment; but she could only throw herself down before Him in silence and weep. The father had

become more and more gloomy as the days rolled by. He was all but brought to the verge of cursing the Being that had "appointed" all this misery. Nothing but a vague, undefinable hope that perhaps after all the minister and deacon were wrong saved him from open blasphemy. Mrs. Farley alone was a tower of strength. It could not last much longer, she would say. She prayed that the days might be shortened and that they might know the worst. This suspense was death. And so Mary thought this evening as she sat by the little window. Better know the worst at once, then meet it as God gave strength. Heaven help the child, she was so young, so tender, so frail.

When her father arrived at the parsonage Mr. Fenwick was out. "He jest went over to th' poor widder's," said the housekeeper, inviting Abijah to come in and wait. "Yew know th' baby died last night, poor thing, though ez for that, ef it wuz one of the 'lect its all right, an' ef it twant, why it'll not get ez much of the 'tarnal flames ez if 'twere older."

Abijah had no sympathy just now to waste on widows or dead babies, elect or otherwise. His own troubles he thought were greater than those of all others combined. "He'll soon be back," continued the woman, as the dejected man sank into a chair. "Heow's Mary, th' dear?"

"Abeout the same," was the laconic reply, and he relapsed into silence unbroken till the entrance of the minister himself.

"Good evening, Abijah; good evening. I'm glad to see you again," was the somewhat wearily-expressed salutation of the old pastor as he resigned his hat and staff into the hands of his faithful Sarah. The minister sat down, and Abijah's solemn face assumed if possible a still more solemn aspect as he waited for the never-failing consola-

tion of his friend. But he waited this time in vain. When he lifted his eyes at length, and glanced curiously in the direction of Mr. Fenwick to see why he was not being comforted, he beheld such an expression of utter sadness and weariness that for a moment his selfishness vanished. He almost forgot his own troubles in surprise at the unusual dejection of one he had ever seen so cheerful and happy. Abijah dropped his eyes again waiting for his turn, and so the three sat silently gazing at the floor.

"Little Freddie would come and look at the cold pale face of the baby in the cradle, and then he would toddle away to the corner where he kept his playthings and bring his string of pretty beads and call so piteously to the silent one: 'Here, Wobbie, here; take it, Wobbie, take it!'"

The old man's voice choked and the hot tears streamed down his furrowed cheeks; but he recovered himself and went on:

"'You know, sir,' said the poor mother, 'he always called baby Wobbie; he can't say Robbie. Baby used take hold of the beads and they would play with them by the hour together!'"

Sarah here broke down completely, and, hiding her face in her apron, swayed to and fro in her chair.

"Then he would run to the mother and cry so that I thought my heart must break: 'Ma, wake Wobbie; wake dear 'ittie Wobbie!' and he would creep up again to the cradle and put his chubby little hands on the cold cheek, but he would draw back as if afraid of something, and running to the mother would hide his head in her lap."

"'We'll have to put Wobbie in a box in the ground,' the mother would say as best she could with her sobbing, and then the bewildered child would cry out, 'No, ma, no. What for? Don't put dear 'ittie Wobbie in 'e ground,'

and again he would toddle off to his corner and bring some new plaything to the cradle. 'Here, Wobbie; dear 'ittie Wobbie, take it from Freddie.'"

The minister paused. A death-like silence was in the room, broken only by the suppressed sobs of the housekeeper.

"I couldn't stand it any longer. I had to come right away; the little one in the cradle looked so much—I have seen a great many cold little faces since then, but I thought I never saw one that looked so much like our own dear Georgie the day he died!"

Sarah groaned aloud and tossed herself back and forth in her chair. It was the first time in thirty years he had mentioned the name of the sweet boy they had laid beside the young mother on the hillside. Abijah rose and crept stealthily from the room. The two sat together with bowed heads, while the fountain of sorrow found vent in tears. An occasional sob from the woman told of her anguish. Many long years had she been with him; but she had never seen anything like this since the day when they came home from little Georgie's burial. It was a luxury to her kind heart to be permitted to weep with him now. The minutes flew by, and the darkness of night came down upon them, but they moved not. They sat in the gloaming and wept. It must have been well on to midnight when the minister's tremulous voice aroused his companion:

"'The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in His way. Though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with His right hand. I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.'"

Again a pause, and now his voice is heard in prayer.

It was the simple pleading of a tired child with a loving Father, and when it was ended he called to his housekeeper :

"Where are you, Sarah ?"

"Here, clus by yew, sir !"

"Give me your hand, Sarah. I have lived my whole life over to-night, and—I am not disappointed. 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil ; for Thou art with me ; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.' The Lord bless you, Sarah, and make His face to shine upon you."

Then, refusing a light, she heard through her sobs his unsteady steps going up the stairs to his room. It was late when she awoke next morning. The sun was streaming down through the window on her bed, and its warm touch on her face had aroused her. She felt so ashamed of herself, for she knew the dear old master must have been astir for an hour at least. She never so hurried as she did preparing the simple breakfast ; but it was soon waiting and ready for him. "He's in the garding, I s'pose," and she glanced out of the window feeling so pleased, kind soul, that he had not come in before she was prepared for him. Such a thing had never been known to happen, and she could not just see what she should have done had it happened this morning.

"I can't see him nowhar; I s'pose he's off deown th' street for a walk, it is sech a fine mornin'," and she busied herself putting the cosey room to rights as she waited. "Thar he is ; here he cums at last," she exclaimed as a footstep was heard outside, and she tripped toward the kitchen when stopped by a loud rap at the front door. "La's me, it's not him arter all !" and she hastened back to the door which, to her amazement, she found still locked. It was Abijah. He had come over, he said, to see about sending

the letters. Sarah staggered at the thought of any one finding her master in bed at that hour. Then her heart smote her as she recalled the night before. He was so tired, she soliloquized, creeping up the stairs on tip-toe, though why on tip-toe she couldn't say if questioned. She was going to wake him, but she stole along as stealthily as if it was the last thing in the world she thought about. Then she tapped at his door so lightly—a fly would have made more noise. Then louder, and she trembled at the fearful noise she thought she had made; but there was no response. Then she opened it a little very softly, and called in a low whisper. Then a little wider and a little louder call. Then she went in. A wild, piercing shriek and heavy fall on the floor! Abijah, aroused from his lethargy, rushed up and into the room. The old minister lay on the bed like a sleeping child; but it was the sleep of death. His hands were clasped on his breast as if in prayer. A radiant smile wreathed his lips, as if when the angel spoke to him in the night, he had called so sweetly that the weary man thought he but heard the voice of his loved ones—the mother and the baby—so smiled his soul to God.

CHAPTER XL.

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF WILLIAM.

THE day following the departure of Gen. Waldo for the Grand Battery, William was arraigned before a court-martial at headquarters. The young soldier stated his case clearly, admitting the assault, at the same time showing the annoyance to which he had been subjected. Harry, who had been detained as a witness, with tears in his eyes

related how his friend had been taunted from the day they first met Waterman in Harmony.

"Are you a relative of the prisoner, young man?" asked the general kindly.

"No, sir; we were brought up together."

"Why do you think so much of him, then; why do you love him so if you are not related?"

"Because—because I love him!"

The general smiled. Waterman, whose face bore evidence of the severe punishment he had received, made a great ado as to how he had been attacked three separate times by the prisoner, and concluded by saying that he did not consider his life safe for an hour if Farley was let go.

"You have nothing to do with that, sir," replied Pepperrell sternly. "You have brought all this on yourself, and you deserved more than you got!"

The decision was given accordingly, and William, to the unbounded joy of Harry, was set at liberty. The following morning as the two were sauntering about camp, having nothing just then to do, they were hailed by an orderly from headquarters with the command for William to report himself at once to the general. They both proceeded in haste to Pepperrell's tent, Harry pale and trembling, fearing some new trouble to his friend. The general was busy writing when William entered, but immediately looked up with a pleasant smile:—

"Private Farley, I hope you will never be placed under arrest again. I think there is the material of a good soldier in you. Your persecutor will not be likely to annoy you again, and I expect to hear favorable accounts of you during the siege. You will carry this despatch to Gen. Waldo at the Grand Battery, and report yourself with your young comrade to your captain. You know the way—now be off, both of you!"

William grasped the despatch, and with a few words in acknowledgment of the commander's kindness, saluted and retired.

"We're to start at once for the Grand Battery, Hal," he cried, rejoining his companion outside.

"Good," shouted the boy, his mind greatly relieved. It was the work of a few minutes for the two young men to pack their knapsacks. As William grasped his musket for the start, he exclaimed with emotion: "There, I've got you again, and when you will be taken from me it will be in death." They soon had plunged into the woods. "No danger of falling into the hands of the Monseers, is there, William?"

"I shouldn't think so," was the careless reply; "we're on the same trail we took the other day. See, this is the very spot we stopped the big Frenchman," he exclaimed, as they emerged into an open space.

They trudged on now for some time without speaking till they arrived at a wet, boggy place right in their path. They both halted to consider the best way of crossing. Harry sat down on a log, and his comrade after a moment followed his example.

"William, you know how I love you," said the young lad, after a minute or two, looking at the other with his heart in his eyes.

"Why, Hal, of course I do! What a strange question."

"No, it is not a strange question at all. You said something the day we left Canso that makes me think you did not believe in my love."

"Oh!"

"Yes, and you doubt Mary's love too, which is worse."

The other was on his feet and plunging through the bog before the words were well uttered. The disappointed boy could do nothing but follow in silence.

. "God save them both," he murmured to himself. "As for my own life I will willingly offer it up if it will bring them together again. The enemy has begun his work, of that there can be no doubt."

In his confusion at the abrupt movement of his friend, and blinded by the tears which gushed into his eyes, Harry stumbled off the hillocks over which he was picking his way, and sank into the soft yielding mud to his knees. William had disappeared on the other side in the thicket and was out of sight. Harry thought he had heard him shout, but was not certain. With considerable difficulty he extricated himself from the mire, wet, cold, and bespattered with mud. He stopped to listen, and, hearing his friend crashing through the bushes far ahead, dashed forward. After proceeding for some minutes his heart almost failed him at William's strange conduct.

"How could he leave me here?" he cried bitterly; then, regardless of consequences, he made the woods ring with the shout, "William! William! William!" but the mocking echo among the trees gave the only reply.

"What can it mean; is he only just trying me?" Then, almost angry at the thought, he pushed on in silence. He had not gone far, toiling wearily up the hills till he came out in full view of the city, the exact spot on which they had stood a few days previously. He entered the woods again, and now certain that William was dodging him ahead, he hurried boldly forward till arriving, as he judged, in the rear of the Grand Battery, he climbed cautiously up the hill. As he came out into the clearing again in sight of the city, a faint cheer was borne upon the gale to his ear. He paused a moment to admire the scene before him, and then rapidly descending made for the gate. The sentry on duty was one of his own company, and the tired boy was no sooner within hearing than he sang out:

"How long since William passed in?"

"William? William Farley? Why, he's not here!"

"Didn't he pass in here a few minutes ago?"

"No, not he. Whar's he?"

The boy staggered against the wall, which by this time he had reached, and would have fallen to the ground had he not been caught by the guard. Fear, love, despair, surged through his heart at those awful words. The sergeant, hearing the commotion, came forward and learned from the stupefied boy the story of his parting with William in the woods. The matter was immediately reported to Waldo, and a small squad was instantly sent out in search, but after several hours' absence they returned bringing no tidings.

Harry, sick, wearied, and almost frantic, dragged himself to his company's quarters, stunned by the tragic events of the day.

CHAPTER XLI.

HARRY'S TRAGIC DEATH.

DAY followed day, and the dejected boy's hopes died out of his heart. His comrades tried to rally him, but his only reply to it all was the touching refrain: "He's lost—he's lost; we knew it would happen!" He sought an interview finally, in sheer despair, with the chaplain. They were together for a long time, and when he returned it was evident to all that his last hope was gone. They loved the lad, those great, rough, honest fellows! They had known him, many of them, since he was a baby. They

knew his attachment to William, and the delicate relations existing between them on Mary's account.

"This'll kill th' old man," whispered one to another as Harry sought the open air again.

"Th' old man? Who keers abeout th' old man. It'll kill more'n him!"

"So 'twill; an' what's worse nor all, Hal's loosin' his mind!"

"Dew yew think so? Oh, I hope not!"

"Wal, ef yew'll only keep an eye on him when he thinks no wan's alookin' yew'll think so tew!"

"See aheer! D'yew think this here is true they're atellin'?" asked one.

"What?" cried half a dozen in chorus.

"Why, that William's deserted—gonè over t' th' Monseers!"

"Never!" roared a score of voices at once.

"No, never!" indignantly put in Sergt. Gibson, not having spoken before. "No, never! I know William Farley; he'd die first! A truer soldier isn't in the army."

"The capen," replied the man who had asked the question, "the capen said it in me own hearin'. He'd ben awatchin' on William, sez he, fur sum time, an' he know'd he'd desart if ever he'd get a good chance."

"Captain or no captain, I don't believe one word of it! Pshaw! Why desert?" contemptuously asked the sergeant.

"Dunno; but what looks bad, they say he'd a despatch or suthin' fur th' general."

"Oho!" bawled out a soldier who hitherto had said nothing. "Oho! that's it, is it!"

"What's it?" demanded Gibson, with indignant vehemence.

"Why, that he'd a despatch or suthin' fur th' general, t' be sure."

"Well, what of that? What if he had?"

"O, nothin' at all, only he'd a despatch or suthin' fur th' general."

The sergeant looked at the man for some moments in silence, as if uncertain what he meant. The first speaker spoke again.

"It's my opinion that William's fell inter th' hands of th' Monseers. Yew see he was ahead of th' boy considerable."

"But I've heerd worse nor eny of yew abeout him," again spoke the man who had insinuated about the despatch.

"What?" cried a dozen, "what hev ye heerd?"

"That he killed Waterman. He's missin' tew, yew know!"

"A happy riddance, then," sneered Gibson. "The cowardly fool!"

"Wal," said one who had been up to this a silent listener; "wal, ef it wasn't fur th' doctrines, I dunno what th' poor lad would dew jest neow!"

"Doctrines," ejaculated Gibson, not catching his meaning.

"Yez; yew see, it's all foreordained what'll happen tew us heer; an', fur my part, I'm not agoin tew trouble meself abeout enything."

"O, of coorse, we all b'lieve that," replied three or four at once.

"Yez," continued the other, "nothin' ken happen t' us here but what God fixed from all 'ternity. Harry, poor lad, ken meditate on the dark ways of providence, an' that's abeout th' best kind of comfort I knows on; it allers duz me good to meditate on th' dark ways."

The conversation was here abruptly stopped by the entrance of the general's orderly with the command for

Sergt. Gibson to report himself at once at headquarters. He soon returned in high spirits, announcing that he was to start next morning before break of day, with a detachment of twenty-five men, on a raid into the country, to ascertain, if possible, the movements of the Indians, who were reported to be hovering in great numbers in the rear of the army.

"Lucky fellow! Who's goin'?" cried every man in a breath.

"Take me!" shouted one.

"And me," cried the man who took comfort in the dark ways.

"Hold on, boys, hold on! I've got them all down here!" and he proceeded to read out the names from the list in his hand.

"Harry Oliver!"

A murmur of surprise followed the announcement of his name.

"It's tew bad. The boy's all broke up!" exclaimed a man who had seen the lad in his cradle.

"It'll do him good, perhaps," answered Gibson. "Poor fellow, go and find him out one of you, and let him know."

Harry was glad enough to go. "Anything but this terrible suspense" he said. He might hear something about William, and if not, perhaps he might meet death himself. He would die willingly. How could he ever go home to his Mary without her lover? He actually smiled when told he was one of the raiding party.

The detachment started before it was clear the next morning, Capt. Allen being on the ground to see them off. Climbing the Green Hills they struck into the woods beyond, and before the sun was well above the tree-tops, several miles lay between them and the Grand

Battery. About noon they reached a fine settlement situated on a beautiful sheet of water covered with fishing boats at anchor. No sign of inhabitants however could anywhere be seen, and the men scattered themselves carelessly from house to house, plundering whatever they considered of value. A horrid yell! It sounded like the scream of a hundred demons. A shout, which froze the blood in their veins; for, as the soldiers rushed out of the houses, some here, some there—all scattered—they found, to their horror, that they were surrounded by over two hundred bellowing red-skins and French thirsting for blood. There was no possibility of rallying. They were cut down like dogs. Those who were not killed at the first onslaught were reserved for a worse fate. Among these latter was Harry. He had been standing listlessly at the door of a dwelling-house, taking no part or interest in the wild frolic of his comrades. He was hemmed in by a score of savages. He had shot one and brained another with the butt of his musket, when he was felled senseless to the ground by a blow from a club. A dozen tomahawks flashed in the sunlight above his prostrate body, when, with a fiendish chuckle, they were stopped by an aged chief, and the still unconscious boy was bound securely and left bleeding where he fell.

The shouts and yells had now become demoniac. Gibson and two of the party were plundering the most pretentious-looking house, when they heard the first terrific war-whoop outside. A glance from the door showed them that to come out was but to court death. Gibson sprang up the ladder leading to the chamber, and was followed breathlessly by his two companions. To draw the ladder after them was the work of a moment. Fortunately they had their firearms and ammunition, and, with grim determination, they resolved to sell their

lives as dearly as possible. They knew that if discovered it meant a horrible death. If not dislodged, they would be burnt in the house with its contents.

"Pray, boys; pray, if you ever prayed in your lives. Hush—here they come!"

There was a whoop, and the room below swarmed with the savages. After searching about for a few minutes they retired, and the imprisoned men breathed again more freely.

"Pray, boys; pray, if you ever prayed in your lives!" again repeated the sergeant in an unearthly whisper.

"What'll we be aprayin' abeout?" said he who took comfort in the dark ways, for he was one of the party. "Ef this heer thing's ordained 'tain't no use t' pray!" The way was certainly dark enough for him now to give him all the comfort he desired.

The boards on the gable end near which the three men were concealed were in many places an inch apart, and the movements of the Indians outside as a consequence were plainly visible. A consultation of some sort appeared to be going on among them. It was soon over, and was followed by the fiendish war dance. The sergeant knew well what was coming from his long acquaintance with Indian customs on the frontier at home. When the dance was over the prisoners were led forward. "Oh, my God!" groaned Gibson in deepest agony, staggering against the wall. "Yonder is poor Harry! I had hoped he was dead!" The brave boy had recovered, and stood gazing defiantly in the faces of the hideous throng around him. Gibson levelled his musket through a chink in the boards.

His arm was caught by him of the dark ways. "In heaven's name what're yew goin' tew dew?" was his suppressed shriek.

"Well, perhaps it's better not. There is just a ghost of a chance for us to escape, and I suppose it is not right to throw it away. I was going to shoot the dear lad to save him from this horrible death!"

"Ordained from all eternity!" said the man with the usual inconsistency of his creed. "Yew can't stop what's ordained. I take comfort in meditatin' on that!"

His words were drowned by a terrific yell. The darling boy was being hacked in pieces before their eyes. All the prisoners met the same fate, some under circumstances of unheard-of barbarity. The mutilated bodies were left where they fell on the ground, and, apparently apprehensive of an attack, the unhuman monsters retreated silently to the dark forest beyond.

When night came on, Gibson, satisfying himself that the Indians had all departed, cautiously proceeded to lower the ladder. His position was a truly desperate one. The unearthly silence without made every sound seem like the wild whoop of the savage. "Easy, boys—softly—easy!" but every movement rang out on the still air. It seemed to their excited imaginations as if their very breathing rumbled like the growl of an earthquake. They could hear their hearts thump so loudly that more than once they all stopped in their work shuddering, thinking it was the stealthy step of the enemy. What a creaking made the boards under their feet! Everything appeared to be possessed with the demon of noise. In the dense darkness, though standing shoulder to shoulder, they could see nothing; but fiery eyeballs glared out of every corner upon them. It was a long time before the boards were all removed, and then they began feeling for the ladder. They couldn't find it. Everything they touched seemed in league with hell, imbued with an in-e nal tendency for sound. The soft pressure of a hand

on the planks rang out like the crash of a hammer in the gloom. They found the ladder at last. Lift as carefully as they would, something was sure to be in the way. "Easy, boys—easy—softly!" gasped Gibson, his throat parched and his tongue swollen. "Easy, boys—boys!" They had got one end of the ladder down the opening, when their hearts stopped beating—their hair stood literally on end! A rasping sound was heard—then a screech like the yell of a hundred savages—a loud crash, as if a thunderbolt from heaven had fallen upon them. In their nervous excitation each one had relaxed his hold on the ladder, letting it rush unchecked to the floor below.

"We're lost," groaned Gibson in despair, comprehending what had happened. "Pull it up, boys—for your lives. Where is it?" and he groped frantically in the darkness. "Oh God, it must have dropped on the floor. Can you find it?"

The three swung their arms down the opening regardless now of noise, the one of the dark ways muttering something about the incomprehensible mystery of foreordination, till at last his fingers clutched the ladder. It was dragged up with a hideous racket, the boards were slammed back in their place, and the men once more clutched their muskets. It must have been an hour they sat there—it seemed like an eternity—panting, not daring to breathe a word. Whenever they had convinced themselves that all was quiet again, the sighing of the wind through the forest, or the far-away note of some bird of the night, sent their hearts bounding into their throats.

"I think we can move now, boys," Gibson was at last heard saying in a husky whisper. His tongue was all but paralyzed. He was a brave man—brave as a lion. He would have charged unmoved upon the can-

non's mouth, but he shrunk with a true soldier's dread at the thought of being butchered in cold blood like his comrades.

They got down at last, how they never could tell, but they got down; and into the open air, the door shrieking like an evil spirit behind them. The thick fog from the sea had been driven far inland during their imprisonment—clinging to every tree and shrub as it hugged the ground, till the darkness was almost palpable. It was a fearful undertaking. How to find their way back to the battery through the impenetrable blackness of the forest was only a part, and the smallest part, of the difficulties which beset them. Every step they took they felt might be a step nearer to a horrible death. No one spoke. The man who took comfort in the dark ways was having his fill of it. As they plunged into the woods a new trial awaited them. The branches of the trees were dripping with the moisture of the fog, not only drenching them to the skin, but endangering the use of their firearms. They trudged on, sometimes brought to a standstill by huge windfalls across their path, at other times wallowing in bogs and morasses where they sank almost to their loins. Then when they got on to firmer ground, the dry limbs would crunch under their feet with loud snaps like the report of a musket, while, as the gloom became less dense, every separate tree-trunk sprang up before them like a wild savage ready to brain them. It grew brighter as they advanced; and by-and-bye as the fog lifted itself slowly, they could discern objects ahead. Still they spoke not. And now it is daylight. With faces and hands torn and bleeding, each starts with terror at the sight of the other. Soon they catch sight of the blue sea through the trees, and in another moment emerge on the brow of the hills overlooking the town.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE BURIAL AND THE REVENGE.

THE appearance of the three wearied, bleeding soldiers drawing near created great consternation in the battery. They no sooner approached the gate than they were surrounded by every officer and man off duty. The story was soon told. Wild wails and lamentations arose on every side. To be shot down in fair fight was what they all knew was one of the probabilities of a soldier's life, but to be murdered in cold blood—murdered with such fiendish refinement of cruelty, was something the brave troops knew not what to do about. They wept. Yes, wept! It was a marvellous spectacle. Rough-looking men, who perchánce had not shed a tear for years, sobbing like children.

"An' Harry tew, the dear boy, with his heart nigh broke before he went! Oh, sarjent—his sister! What'll become of her with both of them gone!"

Gibson shuddered in agony as the sight of the bleeding youth rose up again before him. They had by this time all entered the battery.

"Who'll volunteer to avenge the murder of your comrades?" roared Waldo, livid with passion.

"I will!" rose like the cry of one man from three hundred throats.

It was difficult to make a selection, but about one hundred was chosen almost at random. Sergt. Gibson *would* return. "I must go back, general. I must go back or die!"

"Sergeant, impossible! You are near dead now, and the column must move immediately."

"I can never live through this if you refuse to let me avenge the murder of my noble boys. I'll be ready when the men are, general. Never fear."

"As you will then, sergeant, if you will have it so; but remember I will not be responsible for the consequences."

Gibson saluted and was off, soon returning in a dry suit of clothes, the blood washed from his face, and altogether looking as if nothing very serious had happened. Neither of his two companions expressed any desire to return, one of them going off to his bed to take comfort in meditating on the dark ways of Providence!

Chaplain McDonald was ordered to accompany the expedition in order that the murdered men might receive Christian burial. He was troubled with his heart, he said; in fact, his heart had been troubling him more or less since the army landed at Gabarus Bay. Could not the dead be brought in and buried near the battery? It was wrong—a very great sacrilege to bury Christian soldiers where their graves could be violated by the idolater! Yes, the dead should be buried here!

"I will give you just ten minutes to get ready," thundered Waldo, glancing at his watch as he turned his back with contempt on the man.

The detachment was in line long before the chaplain issued from his quarters. He had become the laughing-stock of the garrison.

"Where's your hatchet, chaplain?" queried Gibson, "haven't you got it? I saw images out there that you can have a blow at, if so disposed!"

The chaplain made no reply, but looked the picture of despair.

"Forward—March!" and with teeth set and flashing eyes the column filed out by the gate. There was no cheering. The men were too desperately in earnest for that.

Gibson's blood was at fever heat. He felt that the awful disaster of yesterday was in a great measure owing to his own imprudence, and nothing but vengeance swift and sure would satisfy him. They arrived at the settlement early in the afternoon. The dead bodies were just as they had fallen. At the awful sight, the men burst forth again into wild cries and wails. The mutilated remains were gathered together, laid tenderly in a row on the grass, while a squad was detailed to dig the graves. Sentinels were posted on the outskirts to give warning in case of surprise. The main body rested for any emergency. At last the graves were finished. The company formed, and marching with reversed arms to the spot, twenty-two disfigured bodies were lowered into their last resting-place. When they came to poor Harry's mangled body, a burst of horror shuddered along the line till the men shook like the trees in the forest swept by the passing gale. He was *so* young, so gentle, so pure, so good! Every one loved him. Those strong men who quivered here as they looked on his disfigured remains, recalled, many of them, the little boy with the sweet face and loving eyes they had so often met in the green lanes around Woodside. And here was all that remained of the lad! And then they thought of Mary. How could she bear it? The two had never been apart for a day before he left home; and the thought pierced them afresh till the great tears rolled down their bronzed cheeks like a baptism for the dead. Even the chaplain was moved, and forgetting himself for a moment brushed away a tear. It was such a sorry sight. They covered him up at length, letting the earth fall on him softly, for they loved him:

"Oh, he was somebody's love;
Somebody's heart enshrined him there;
Somebody wafted his name above,
Night and morn, on the wings of prayer.

Somebody wept when he marched away,
Looking so handsome, brave and grand;
Somebody's kiss on his forehead lay;
Somebody clung to his parting hand.

Somebody's waiting and watching for him—
Yearning to fold him again to her heart;
And there he lies with his blue eyes dim,
And the smiling child-like lips apart.
Tenderly they buried the fair young dead,
Pausing to drop on his grave a tear—
Carved on the wooden slab at his head,
'Somebody's darling lies buried here!'"

The company marched back from the graves, and Gibson with a husky voice addressed the men:

"We can't find the enemy! Let us avenge the blood of our dear boys as best we can. Burn—destroy—demolish everything to the earth. To the work! Break ranks—away!"

A shriek rather than a shout followed his words. Soon rolling columns of smoke began to ascend from every house.

"Here's the chapel, boys!" yelled one. It was locked, but a few blows from a half dozen musket butts shattered the door. The men swarmed in. "Whar's the chaplain neow an' his hatchet? This is what he's ben atalkin' abeout so long; heer's them thar imajess, shure's yew live! Whar is he? Bring him—carry him—drag him along! Away for him some of ye!"

"I'll get him!" cried a stalwart Harmony boy, an attendant on the chaplain's church, but as great a sceptic as to the hatchet as Ned Gilchrist himself. "I'll get him ef he's tew be got!" He soon returned, dragging, rather than leading, the reluctant McDonald.

"Chaplain: yer hatchet, whar's it? Hew tew th' arth—behold the ijols! Whar's yer hatchet, man? Look at them thar imajess!" were the questions and admoni-

tions rained upon him from every side as he was pushed up the aisle.

"Get him an ax. I see wan a minute ago somewhar," shouted the man who was hustling the reverend warrior along.

The axe was soon got and handed to the now thoroughly alarmed minister, who, quivering in every limb, hesitated to take it.

"Take hold of the axe, sir!" thundered Gibson, entering the chapel at the moment and taking in the situation at a glance. "Take hold of the axe, sir!" and he strode up the aisle with drawn sword. The wretched man, seeing it was useless to refuse, and trembling at the sight of the sergeant's weapon, grasped the axe with desperation.

"You cowardly poltroon!" roared Gibson, who was beside himself with all he had passed through, "You cowardly poltroon, I have listened to more than enough of your cant for some weeks! Now to your work!"

The chaplain, goaded by the taunt, here made a pass at a hideous picture of the Virgin on the wall, but, missing his aim, the axe came crashing down in dangerous proximity to his own toes, whilst the soldiers roared and shook with laughter. "Take better aim, sir," screamed Gibson, laying the cold blade of his sword on the chaplain's face. The men roared again. Keenly sensitive to the taunts which were being heaped upon him, McDonald madly rushed at the altar, and soon the axe was crashing among crucifixes and candles. "There! let's leave the fool now and fire the building!" cried the sergeant. It was the work of a moment. The flames burst out on every side, driving the chaplain now rather reluctantly from his work of destruction, as he was making frantic but ineffectual passes at a huge altar-piece above his head.

Every house was burnt to the ground. Everything that could by any possibility be of service to the enemy was utterly demolished. When their work was done they started unmolested on the return march.

As they drew near the battery they relaxed their vigilance, and although very much exhausted, most of the men fell into sprightly conversation on the events of the day.

"It's kinder queer, tew," spoke the man who had dragged the chaplain to his work, and addressing no one in particular. "Yez, I 'low 'tis kinder queer."

"What's kinder queer?" asked one near him.

"O, I wuz only meditatin' on th' deekrees: it *is* kinder queer."

"What's kinder queer, I wanter know?" again asked the other.

"Wal, yew see he wuz a good lad; handsum an' sech, an' I 'lows it's kinder queer."

"Yer kinder queer yerself, 'pears t' me!" put in his comrade, somewhat nettled.

"Wal, p'raps I be, shouldn't wander ef I wuz. Howsumever, that's neether heer nor thar. I wuz a sayin' t' meself that it's kinder queer, an' yew needn't listen ef yew doant like ter!"

"But I dew like ter. I wanter know what's kinder queer?"

"Dew yew, tho'? Wal, he wuz a handsum boy, an' it's kinder queer, that's all. 'Tis all right 'nough tho'."

"What's kinder queer, woant yer say? Speak eout, man."

"I wuz asayin' ez heow th' lad wuz handsum an' sech."

"What lad?"

"Why, poor Harry, t' be shure! It's kinder queer that he shuld be sent inter th' world t' be hacked like

yon, an' skulped by them thar red Injuns. Kinder queer, aint it? I 'low 'tis."

"Wal, yez, neow that I think on't. Foreordained t' be hacked an' skulped. Yez, it *is* kinder queer."

"It's true, tho'. I wuz consolin' on myself thinkin' on it ez we came 'long; but I 'low 'tis kinder queer."

"Wal, queer or no queer, 'tis in th' Book, an' what's in th' Book's all right."

"Shuld think 'twas," laconically remarked the other, and the conversation dropped, both appearing mutually satisfied.

CHAPTER XLIII.

DEATH OF D'EFFIAT.

When these events were transpiring in connection with the men of the Grand Battery, the main body of the army under Pepperrell was not by any means idle. The commander-in-chief, seeing the insufficiency of his force to properly invest the fort, decided to advance regularly against the West Gate and the King's Bastion. The first battery was erected on the slope of the Green Hills, considerably less than two thousand yards from the walls. It was a desperate undertaking that now stared the general in the face. Nothing but his abiding confidence in God and in the righteousness of his cause could have nerved him to the task. When the wretched-looking earthwork was in course of construction, the guns with which it was to be manned had to be dragged on sledges

from the camp at Gabarus Bay, over rocks, brush, fallen trees, as well as through marshy bogs where the men sank in places almost up to their arm-pits. But there was never a word of complaint. They bent to their task, enlivening it betimes with snatches of song. So expeditiously was the work carried forward that in a few days two batteries were ready to throw their messengers of death into the town,—the second one being only one thousand yards from the gate. The roar of cannon had now become incessant except at night, so that the beleagured garrison found it as much as they could do to attend to the fire of the Grand Battery coming across the harbor, assisted by the two saucy new earthworks that sent their missiles crashing over the walls and through the houses beyond. So firm a foothold had the besiegers secured, and so marvellous had been their success thus far, that at a Council of War held on the 7th May, attended by Warren and Pepperrell, it was determined to send a flag of truce into the town demanding its immediate surrender. This was accordingly done, but Duchambon gallantly replied that he would "answer at the cannon's mouth!" The result was a furious cannonading which was kept up on each side with unwonted fury till darkness settled down over the combatants. When the morning broke, the French were amazed to see frowning within four hundreds yards of them another battery which had sprung up under cover of the night as by magic. Duchambon appears never to have fully comprehended up to this moment the character of the enemy with which he had to contend. He heartily despised them as an undisciplined rabble till, in astonishment, he beheld this last earthwork. He had permitted them to erect their two former wretched-looking works unmolested save by his guns, which, strange to say, did little

damage. He now resolved on bolder measures. On the night following the erection of the last-mentioned battery, a sortie was decided on. He was suspicious of his men—he had good reason to doubt them. True, they had behaved admirably since the siege commenced, but the Governor could not or would not forget their former insubordination. He feared to trust them outside the ramparts. Their urgent appeals to be led against the enemy, he interpreted as merely a ruse to desert *en masse*. It was, however, now a choice between two evils. He must attack this insolent little battery which all day long had so annoyed him, or allow it to beat down the gate before his very eyes. It was as well to lose his men outside as inside, he reasoned, even if they resolved to prove traitors to their flag and king. The sortie was, therefore, fixed for the coming night. No one should lead it but Lieutenant d'Effiat.

"The wretch," muttered Duchambon to himself as he despatched an orderly for the fiery young officer; "the wretch, to deprive me of my d'Hautefort in this time of need. There is not one of my officers that can assist me in this crisis like my dear dead friend. I would rather have lost every one of them, if I could have saved him."

When d'Effiat entered the Governor's quarters he was rather sternly informed what he was sent for. "Take fifty men, trusty and the bravest you can select, and dislodge the heretics from their new work to-night."

"Give me at least double the number, your Excellency," replied the lieutenant more courteously than was his wont, beginning to realize the desperate character of the task entrusted to him.

"Impossible! Not another man. You hear my orders? Are not fifty soldiers of France, led by d'Effiat,

able to cope with three times the number of raw Provincials? You hear my orders, sir. You may go!"

The lieutenant saluted and retired.

"He wants me out of the way—shot down like a dog. That's plain enough. The old fool! Those Provincials are not the poltroons he takes them for, as I have already found to my cost!" and, with a grimace and shrug of the shoulders, he proceeded to carry out his instructions. "Ha, Marie!" he muttered as he passed the convent and lifted his chapeau. "Ha, Marie, those cursed heretics will have the town before long, and then—and—then!"

The night set in with a dense fog from the sea. The darkness was so unusual that the attacking party stumbled and jostled each other in a very unsoldierlike manner as they marched towards the West Gate. Duchambon, deeply interested in the success of the movement, was waiting their arrival in the guard-house. As their shuffling tread was heard approaching along the paved way he advanced to the door. "Proceed cautiously, lieutenant. You know every inch of the ground, and need not go a step out of the road. Let not a word be spoken. When near enough, dash on the work, spike the guns, and give the signal. We will then open on the first and second batteries."

The Governor returned to his quarters, and the column filed noiselessly out through the gate. "It's madness," muttered the unfortunate d'Effiat to himself, tightening his sword-belt; "it's madness, but I am a soldier of France—here goes!"

The party crept along by the road breathlessly. The darkness, if possible, became denser as they advanced. It was out of the question to tell where they were. D'Effiat couldn't distinguish the sergeant by his side. The cold, rain-like mist had by this time completely

saturated their hair and beards, and the men shivered in the ranks as the raw wind from the sea swept in upon them from the harbor. The lieutenant grasped the sergeant's arm, and the company was halted. The bewildered officer advanced cautiously to reconnoitre. He soon came back in dismay and whispered to the sergeant: "I can't tell where we are. Can it be possible we have passed the work?" The sergeant thought not, but couldn't make out where they were.

The last English battery, like the two others, was thrown up on the left of the road by which the attacking party advanced, and d'Effiat could not make out whether he was now at its front, flank or rear. The rain, which had long been threatening, began to fall in torrents. In sheer desperation the word was whispered from man to man to file from the road to the left and form for the assault. So long as they were on the hard, well-paved roadway they had marched in something of order, now they stumbled and staggered in confusion over granite boulders, hillocks, and other obstructions. Seeing that it would be impossible to proceed much farther without attracting attention, d'Effiat halted and tried vainly to form his command. A lurid flash right in their faces—a loud report rang out in the darkness—in an instant, wild confusion! A galling fire smote them, and, almost without returning a shot, the French broke and fled, every man for himself. The guns of the King's Bastion opened a terrific fire on the batteries beyond, which was returned with vigor, and for some minutes the heavens were lighted up with the lurid glare of shrieking shells as they crossed and recrossed each other in fiery tracks athwart the sky. Then all was still. The movement had miserably failed. D'Effiat fell at the first volley riddled with bullets, and was buried by the English with honors the following morning.

CHAPTER XLIV.

POOR JACK FULFILLING HIS PROMISE.

On the day following the return of the expedition which had wreaked vengeance upon the French settlement, a rough-looking man in sailor's garb was seen by the sentry from the gate of the Grand Battery, cautiously creeping down from the Green Hills. The man evidently was uncertain how to proceed; for he would advance a step, hesitate, and finally stop. As he drew nearer he was recognized by his dress as belonging to the fleet, and accordingly motioned to come on. When within hailing distance he stopped again.

"Come along, me man; come along! What dew yew want?"

"Oho! All right 'nough t' say cum on! I s'pose yew wanter run me thro' with yer bagnot! Be yew Injuns, or Monseers, or what be yer?"

"Oh, we're friends, man. Come on, won't yew?"

"Ay, ay! Be yew from New Hampshire?" advancing a step or two nearer.

"Yez, most on us. Come on, I say, an' tell us what yew want."

"Sech a time's I've hed!" exclaimed the sailor excitedly as he cautiously drew near, glancing nervously to the right and to the left as if still doubtful about his safety; "Sech a time's I've hed adodgin' here'n thar from th' sojers all th' day long! When I'd put me head out of th' bush I was shure I'd be shot deown or run thro' with a bagnot; an', I s'pose, it's all up with me neow ennyway. Whew!" and he dodged nearer the gate as a screeching shell from the city tore high above his head.

"Wal, I think yer all right neow, ef yew behave yerself. What d'ye want, ennyway?" asked the sentinel as the sailor squatted himself on the ground a few yards distant.

"See aheer!" and he scrambled along on all fours; "I've runned away from th' ship, an' ef I ever get back alive I'll ketch it; but, 'pears to me, I've ketched it already from ye all, with the balls aflyin' areound wan's head, an' skippin' abeout ez thick ez Mother Carey's chickens!"

"Wal, we'll not hurt yew heer, depend on't, if yew behave yerself. Come along, neow."

Picking up courage, the sailor rose to his feet and advanced rapidly toward the gate, just as the sergeant of the guard came forward, having overheard the colloquy. Poor Jack's heart began to fail him again. He was almost on the point of taking to his heels, till once more reassured that he had nothing to fear.

"She looked so castaway-like, an' so I promised tew dew it, an' heer I be tew dew it. I've kept it neow nigh onter a month, p'raps more'n a month!"

"Kept what?" asked the sergeant dubiously, thinking the man demented.

"Shure 'nough. Didn't tell yer what, did I? Be thar a lad heer ye call Oliver? Harry Oliver?"

The kind-hearted soldiers both tried to answer but failed. The sentinel turned away his head to hide the tears that would come.

"Be thar?" persisted the sailor alarmed.

"No."

"Them sojer chaps, deown at th' shore yonder, tole me he wuz heer; but, I s'pose, I've got astray acomin'. Shouldn't wonder with all the dodgin' I had of Monseers 'n bagnots!"

"No, yer not astray!"

"Then, he's heer?" cried the poor fellow brightening.

"No. He's—dead!"

"Ded?"

"Yes—dead!"

"Did—yew—say—ded?"

"Yes, and buried!"

"An' I've kept it all this time fur nothin'; neow he's ded!"

"Kept what?"

The sailor drew from his bosom a soiled and crumpled letter.

"Look aheer, sojer! Mebbe yer foolin' on me?" and he held the letter between his forefinger and thumb; "his sister—oh, aint she a beauty—she guv it t' me!"

At this juncture footsteps were heard approaching, and presently Capt. Allen and another officer drew near. They were going for a stroll outside the battery, and were on the point of passing when the captain's eye fell on the sailor.

"What? What does this fellow want here, sergeant?" he sternly enquired, stopping in his walk.

"He's got a letter, sir, for poor Harry, from his sister, he says."

"Oh, well, Jack—I'll take the letter; give it to me. I was his captain, you know."

The sailor had no notion of doing anything of the sort, but thrust the letter hurriedly into his bosom.

"Sergeant, arrest the fellow. It's not safe to trust any one in time of war. Arrest him, and put him in the guard-house!"

The sergeant advanced to do as commanded when the sailor struck him a stinging blow on the forehead, and then sprang like a tiger on the captain. Both officers were unarmed, and Jack, striking right and left, was in a fair way of getting out through the gate when stunned by a

blow from the sentinel. Capt. Allen immediately secured the letter, and the poor fellow was dragged insensible to the guard-house.

"A queer customer," remarked his companion to Allen as they resumed their walk.

"I should think he was. The man must be crazy."

"Or a spy!"

"Or a spy. The fact is, you don't know who to trust in such times as these. The evil spirit appears to be more than usually active when great events are transpiring. Who, for instance, would ever imagine that young Farley —a deacon's son and all—would turn out as he did?"

"Sure enough, who would have thought it? Let me see. Was he not a relative of some kind of the poor fellow for whom this crazy sailor had the letter?"

"No, not a relative. I knew both lads since they were babies. Good, honest, God-fearing folk are their parents."

"And do you really think this young Farley has deserted?"

"Do I really think he has deserted! I don't think anything about it—I know it!"

"The unhappy boy! What a horrid fate awaits him should he be alive when the city falls!"

"If alive, it will go hard with him. Pepperrell is very strict; but I'll do what I can to save him, for his parents' sake."

"Certainly, certainly, I know that!"

The two strolled on for a time in silence.

"When have you heard from home, captain?" asked his friend.

"A few days since. Sad new from there; yes, very sad news! Our dear old pastor has gone to his reward—died suddenly. He was worn out, I think, by the strain

of these troublous times and the trials of the hour. Ay, trials : and there will be more deaths in Woodside before long !"

"How so—what makes you think that ?" questioned the other in surprise, struck by the peculiar tone in which he had spoken.

"Well, you see, those two families, the Farleys and Olivers were very intimate. They did not want the boys to come with us. Now, one of the lads is dead, and the other—well, worse than dead, a deserter ! When the old people hear it all they will never bear up under it. There will be one death, at least, that I am almost certain of. I know them well."

"It will be necessary to break the news gently, poor souls !" said his companion with unfeigned sympathy.

"Oh, of course, of course—certainly, certainly. I have done that already as well as I know how. Were the dear old pastor alive, it would have been a great relief to me. As it was, I thought it my duty to let them know as soon as possible."

"Quite right. You are always considerate. The lads, too, belonged to your company."

They had by this time strolled up the brow of the hill and sat down on a rock. The battery was at their feet. The fortress thundered defiance across the harbor a little to the right. Out on a straight line from where they were sitting lay the Island Battery grimly pounding away, while far in the offing were Warren's squadron idly watching the bombardment. The two officers gazed pensively on the scene. Allen was the first to speak.

"What a strange providence," continuing the conversation where it had dropped, "the good old people did not want the boys to leave home. I did not want them—tried every way to discourage young Oliver. Their places could

have been filled by a choice out of a dozen or more who wanted to come, any one of whom would have made a splendid soldier. But the boys came, you see—would come, in fact, must come—and they were in trouble all the time!"

"It *is* strange," replied his friend.

"Strange? Why, it is astounding if viewed from a worldly standpoint!"

"Oh, my dear captain, this life is full of perplexing things."

"So it is, and yet all things are ordered from above," replied Allen solemnly; "my trust in an overruling providence grows stronger every day of my life. I would not know what to do were it not for the consolation of this truth!"

"And yet does it not seem remarkable," continued the other; "does it not seem remarkable that God should ordain all these things which are happening around us?"

"How, remarkable? In what respect remarkable? What do you mean?"

"Well, captain, you have just said it was strange about those two lads?"

"So I did—so it is strange!"

"That is what I say—strange! Now, does it not strike you as among the very; very strange things that God should have foreordained that those boys should come down here, one of them to be cruelly murdered, and the other, perhaps, to die like a dog?"

"I can't just see what you mean! I said it was strange, if viewed from a worldly—I should have said, human standpoint; but, of course, we must not look at it from a human standpoint. The way you are putting it surprises me! Of course, nothing happens by chance. Don't you believe that?"

"Certainly I do; and just there is where the strangeness, to my mind, comes in. The lad Oliver was butchered in cold blood. It had to be so—in a word, every blow he received had been prearranged from all eternity—he neither received one more nor one less than had been ordered. His comrade deserts! Well, that was also foreordained. He will be shot, likely, for doing what he could not help doing—in a word, for doing what in no possible way he could avoid doing!"

"That is it? Now, pray tell me what part of all this strikes you as being among the very, very strange things, viewing it through the medium of the decrees, which, you will admit, is the only proper way to view it?"

"Why, captain, to me it is very, very strange that the boys should have been born at all with such a destiny mapped out for them. From all eternity it was decreed that they should act just as they have acted?"

"Certainly!"

"Now, it seems to me remarkable that this boy Farley will have to be shot as a deserter for simply doing what he could not help doing—what, in fact, he was created to do!"

"And your talk, sir, is more strange to me than all that. I have never heard any one talk as you do!"

"Oh, captain, you must not think I disbelieve the doctrines. I believe them just as firmly as you do!"

"And I believe them from the deepest depths of my heart! I don't understand them, and what is more, I don't want to understand them! I believe them all the more because I don't understand them!"

They were both silent again for a time, Allen being, as before, the first to speak.

"I want to ask you a question, sir."

"By all means, captain. Ask what you will; I will answer if I can."

"Do you believe that God knows all things from all eternity?"

"Well, I did not expect to be put through my catechism at my age, or I would have looked it up before coming out!" was the reply, with a slight touch of raillery, "but I will answer all the same. I do believe it, as I believe in my own identity!"

"Then you believe God knew in all ages how those boys would act?"

"Most undoubtedly!"

"Then He created them knowing what they would do?"

"That is just the point—the difficulty lies just there. The mystery to me is why they should be punished for doing what they could not help doing. It kind of looks as if personal responsibility is not taken into account at all. I would like to ask *you* a question, if you please."

"Well?"

"Did it ever occur to you that God may foreknow the event, yet His foreknowledge does not make the event?"

"This is preposterous—this is sheer blasphemy!"

"It has often struck me," continued the other, not heeding the sneering reply; "it has often struck me that we confound things that differ. God foreknows all things that will come to pass, and yet it may just be possible that He knows them because He sees them—all things being present with Him—and not that they come to pass because He foreordained them. He cannot be deceived; yet who knows but He may see in man the power of acting otherwise than he does act? In a word, may it not be conceivable that God knows a number of different ways a man may act if he so will, instead of the one way that he finally does act?"

The captain rose excitedly to his feet. "We shall settle this matter before the Church when we get home! It

hardly comes under the cognizance of a military court, or we would settle it yonder," and he pointed to the battery.

They walked back in silence, Allen moodily seeking his quarters when they re-entered the work.

CHAPTER XLV.

DISASTROUS REPULSE AT BATTERY ISLAND.

Commodore Warren lay idly in the offing with his squadron. It was a sore trial to the gallant officer to wait here day after day doing nothing, or what appeared to him next to nothing, while the brave Pepperrell was pounding away as he crept closer and closer to the walls. So long as the Island Battery remained in the hands of the enemy the harbor was effectually closed against his ships. Could a few guns be mounted on the heights opposite, the troublesome islet would be placed in a hazardous position, as the distance was only about one thousand yards. There were, however, insuperable difficulties in the way. To transport artillery from the base of operations at Gabarus Bay was a most formidable undertaking, and the commodore could see no other practical solution of the problem than to wait patiently the slow developments of the siege. At this juncture the fortunate discovery was made, that under the waters of the harbor, at a place known as Careening Wharf (only a few hundred yards from the contemplated battery), over thirty guns were lying on the bottom, where they had been hastily thrown by the French. It was another of the many

marvellous coincidences which marked the progress of the siege, and which came home to the hearts of the simple-minded New Englanders as a special evidence of the favor of God. In the whole army there was not probably a man who did not firmly believe that it had been arranged from all eternity that those cannons should have been submerged just there for their use. The raising and transporting of the guns were, as a consequence, immediately entered upon with great alacrity, and, notwithstanding a fierce attack by the enemy, the work was rapidly pushed forward. It soon, however, became apparent that the obstacles in the way had not wholly been overcome by this providential discovery. The labor occupied the entire attention of nearly two hundred men, who could not well be spared from the small army of investment. At this crisis it was decided by a Council of War that an attempt should be made to reduce Battery Island by assault. No movement since the siege commenced was more perilous, and both officers and men fully appreciated the gravity of the undertaking. The assault was decided upon in opposition to the advice of the most experienced officers, who held that it was running clearly in the face of the decrees. Volunteers were however called for, and about four hundred selected for the purpose. The men were permitted the rare privilege of choosing their own commander, their choice being a Captain Brooks—a brave soldier as well as a good man.

On the night of the 27th May the expedition started. They embarked in light whale-boats and rowed noiselessly round by the Black Point on the Atlantic seaboard. It was their intention to effect a landing on the island, and then dash on the work, trusting to the audacity of the assault to bewilder the enemy. Fortune

again appeared to smile upon them. The sky was overcast. The fog was thick, palpable. The wild moanings of the sea as the waves rolled in sullenly against the walls of the huge fortress they were passing drowned the sound of their oars as, like grim spectres of the deep, they swept swiftly, silently, surely on. The men held their breath. Not a word was spoken. Not a whisper even. The slightest ripple of an oar might bring the great plunging shot upon them, hurling their boats to the bottom in one common ruin. At length they were past the town in safety. With long, steady, but stealthy strokes they headed for the island. A minute more and the boats would ground upon the beach. A shout—a cry—a shot—a volley—and the air is thick with bullets.

"Pull, boys—pull for your lives!" roared the heroic Brooks.

To their horror and dismay they find themselves among the breakers. The boats dash in pieces on the rocks. Some plunge to the bottom riddled by balls.

"Jump out!" screams the commander. A ringing cheer answers him as about two hundred of his men leap into the seething surf and stumble up through the breakers, up over the slimy stones, up in the face of the withering fire of the enemy.

"Forward—charge!"

A wild yell, and they dash after their captain. The fight is now terrific. The whole garrison is upon them. The English, dripping wet, find, to their bewilderment, that their firearms are all but useless; but they dash on. Shrieks, roars, yells, cries, cheers, mingle with the sharp rattle of musketry. Slowly, but surely, against terrible odds and at a fearful disadvantage, our brave lads are gaining inch by inch, driving the French before them. Brooks springs like a lion for the flagstaff, cutting a lane

for himself with his sword. In an instant he has the flag of France at his feet and is grasping it with his left hand when he falls, cleft through the skull by a Swiss soldier. Seeing their commander gone our men lose heart, and, huddling together, throw down their arms.

Over sixty brave New England boys lie cold, and stark, and dead around and within the work. About one hundred are made prisoners.

When morning broke over the scene it was only to intensify the feeling of gloom in the army. Cheer after cheer rang out over the bay from the island, was caught up by the fortress, and sent echoing defiantly over the heads of the besiegers, dying away among the fir-clad summits of the hills. The complete and utter failure of the assault inspired the French, while it correspondingly discouraged the English. It was the first reverse of the siege, and for the time hope died within them. But it was of short duration. There were not wanting those who pointed to the repulse as an evidence of God's displeasure at not following His leadings. It was said that Providence had arranged the way the battery was to be silenced, and that He had placed the means of doing it before their eyes. Contrary to what was plainly foreordained, they had attacked the island and lost about the same number of men as those who had previously been engaged in raising the sunken guns. It was plainly their duty, then, to commence where they had so rashly left off. These views prevailed. Instant preparations were again set on foot to erect a battery at Lighthouse Point, as at first contemplated. The work was laborious; but it was now prosecuted with that vigor that came of assured conviction that the whole thing had been divinely planned.

Meanwhile Pepperrell crept nearer and nearer to the West Gate. A breaching battery, only two hundred

and fifty yards from the ramparts, had been constructed, and was now thundering away almost incessantly, day and night till the drawbridge and portions of the adjoining walls were masses of tottering ruins.

The reverse at Battery Island, it has been said, cast only a momentary gloom over the besiegers. A gay, rollicking lot they were. While those in the trenches were fightiug like veterans within speaking distance of the enemy, those off duty were enjoying themselves in all the wild abandon of guileless hearts. Pitching quoits, shooting at marks, wrestling, running, frolicking, they were as happy an army as ever sat down to the hazardous operations of a siege. They knew nothing of the art of war; but they were as brave as the bravest regiment of the line. They built their wretched earthworks on a plan entirely their own, despising the slow approaches of zig-zags and epaulments. Selecting their site in the day-time, while shot, and shell, and canister raged and roared and tore around them, the next morning the astounded enemy beheld another battery nearer than ever, where no sign of broken ground appeared when the sun had set. And thus they went on, fighting, and frolicking, and trusting in God.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE SAD NEWS IS HEARD IN WOODSIDE.

Deacon Farley had been more than usually cheerful all day at his work. He had more than his wonted share of labor just now, and sadly missed his boy from the field; but this beautiful day towards the close of the month he had felt almost like himself again. He could

not account for the feeling; but he looked back with surprise at the last few weeks as he recalled his melancholy. It would be but a short time now, he hoped, before the lads would be back again in their old places none the worse for the war, and he felt certain he would be all the better for it himself. So would his dear wife —bless her—he mentally ejaculated, she had so much to bear, and she bore it so patiently. While she had been bravely facing this trouble, he had been moping his life away meditating on the doctrines. He had been adding burden to burden and sorrow to sorrow; for he had it settled in his mind, after much reading of the Bible and Commentary, that William was not one of the elect. To-day a light had shone into his desolate heart as he was at work in the fields—such a sudden gleam of sunshine that he felt sure it came from God. He had not been thinking much about his boy, strange to say; but, like a revelation, the thought came upon him: William has been miraculously saved from the knife of a would-be assassin! What did that mean? Would the Lord go out of His way to save a reprobate? Clearly not. He could not just recall any such instance! William's wonderful deliverance could have but one meaning: the boy was included in the covenant, and no harm could come to him. Even if he died an honorable death it would be well with his soul. If no dishonor attached to him, it was proof positive that the lad was among the chosen few, chosen from all eternity. And the comforted man took off his hat reverently, lifting his eyes to heaven in devout thankfulness. And then he thought of Mary. Well, when the boys came back, Mary would come and live with them, as it had been arranged, never to go away again. With William married to his beloved Mary, how happy would they all be! And there again was Abijah.

He would never have consented to give up his idol but for the war; and thus God was bringing good out of every seeming evil. With such thoughts as these Farley worked away all the afternoon, coming home in the evening with the old smile upon his face. O, that smile, that well-remembered smile—the smile that had always wreathed his lips before he began meddling with the mysteries! His wife couldn't make it out. At first the thought pierced her like a dagger that his mind had at last given way; but he immediately solved the problem by frankly telling her what had been his thoughts in the field. Before his elevation to the diaconate there never had been any secrets between them. In the olden days he never did anything great or small without his wife knowing all about it. He had never been known to cross her in anything; and, noble, true soul that she was, she respected his confidence by never imposing upon it, or at least seeming so to do. If she wanted anything done, with the adroitness and tact of her sex it was always so arranged that he imagined before it was half accomplished that it was he himself that wanted it done all the time. And his dear wife had, of course, agreed to it! Since his acceptance of the important office in the Church, with its consequent study of the doctrines, things had been somewhat different. His wife's feelings, therefore, can be more easily imagined than described, when, on this pleasant evening he walked into the kitchen, and, with the cheery voice of old, told her what had come to him in the fields. He had been very much to blame, he said, giving way to doubts and fears, but that was over now. The lads would be back in a few weeks at most, and they would be all the happier for what they had gone through. He had meditated upon it all the afternoon, and he felt sure it was the purpose of God to bring the boys back.

After supper he concluded he would go down to Abijah's and cheer them up a bit. Poor things! Abijah had plenty to make him gloomy now, Farley admitted. In fact he could not half blame him to-day for having been mystified over the decrees when his wife was taken away, for had he not a fiery ordeal of it himself the last few weeks, and he a deacon? Not that he doubted like Abijah! No, perish the thought; but he had trembled lest his boy's soul was doomed! So, kissing his wife as he had not done for many a day, he rose.

"Hadn't yew better go deown t' th' village first, dear. Mebbe there's news cum?"

"Well, I hadn't thought of that. You see it is quite a walk, and I'm not as smart as I was once."

"O, t' be sure. I only jest thort abeout it. It's quite a long time neow sense we heerd anythink, an' they've ben atellin' on me that them thar ships ar a comin' an' agoin' nigh all the time!"

"Yes, so I believe! Yes, it is just what I have been thinking about, along with what I have told you, pretty much all day."

"But, dear, yer tew tired. Go over tew 'Bijah's, an' t'morror we'll see abeout th' letters; altho'," she added after a slight pause, "I'm most shure ez heow thar's a letter!"

"Tired? Not a bit of it! O, well, I suppose I am a little fatigued; but what of that? What has that to do with it if there is news from the boys? Of course I'll go down!"

"Of course," said his wife.

In a moment he was off. "Jest th' self an' same ez afore he wuz made deeken. Wal, I dew deeclar!" and she watched him disappear over the brow of the hill. "The Lord keep him jest so! Oh, heow 'twould help me tew kerry this heer load on me heart!"

The dear woman was so overjoyed that the tears flowed like rain, and she could find no vent for her feelings till, throwing herself on her knees, she poured forth her thankfulness to God. Then she set about her work cheerily. The light was breaking through the clouds, she thought. Even now was the sheen of the silver lining visible through the gloom. She hummed a little hymn to herself—one of her boy's favorites. How often he had sung it just there, and she glanced fondly at the old settee in the corner, till the tears came again, do what she would. Her work was at last finished, and she sat down in the twilight, whispering to herself, "I s'pose he'll be late;" but she rose hurriedly, hearing his step at the door.

"Why, heow soon yer back," she exclaimed as her husband entered wildly. "What—what's th' matter?" she cried in alarm as he staggered towards a chair calling for a light.

"What's th' matter, dear, in heven's name?"

"Light the candle—quick!"

The candle was burning on the table in an instant, and the deacon, with an open letter in his hand, dragged his chair towards it. Again and again he glanced wildly at the letter.

"Wife!" He hissed the word through his teeth till the alarmed woman sank almost fainting into a seat. "Wife! I'm going mad—I have feared this for days and days! My mind is giving way. Look at this—read it!" and, with a savage gesture, he held the letter towards her.

"What is it?" she shrieked, trembling from head to foot.

"What is it? I don't know—look at it—read it, won't you: be quick! My brain is on fire! God of my fathers—thou covenant-keeping God—desert me not! Quick, woman, quick. Will you read it, or will you not?"

"I can't. Yew know I'm not much at readin' writin'! What is it abeout?" and she scanned the strange handwriting like one in a dream.

"About? Can't you read it and see? Wife! I've gone mad on the road—you haven't a minute to lose before I'm a raving maniac. It has been coming on for weeks—my brain reels!" and he slapped his forehead with his open palm. "The boy's soul is lost—doomed from all eternity!" and he groaned and writhed in his chair. Then he snatched the letter from her, thrust it into her face, telling her again with an awful threat to read it.

She took it, and, as if assisted by a higher power, did what ordinarily would have been almost an impossible task—read the letter with comparative ease. It was from Capt. Allen, and told of the fate of the boys. When she got through she looked up at her husband's face with his wild eyes glaring upon her.

"What is it about—what is it about?" and he grasped his wife's arm till she shrieked with pain and horror. "What is it about, I ask—do you hear me?"

She looked into the blood-shot eyes again. In that moment, she thought afterwards, she had lived an eternity. What could she do? Between her fingers she crushed the letter containing the news of her darling's disgrace—of Harry's death—before her eyes glared a madman waiting for her to speak. Heaven help thee, woman. What canst thou do? What wilt thou do?

"What is the letter about, woman?" and the fingers tightened on her arm. "His soul is damned, is it, at last? I knew it, I knew it—out of the covenant, left out—given over, passed by, to the praise of His glorious justice! Doubted the doctrines—sure sign! Ha, woman, won't you speak? Who's the letter from? I'll tell you—listen: it's from God—it's from God! But what is it

about, do you hear me? What saith the Lord?" and the fingers tightened and the eyeballs glowed like coals of fire.

"Abeout," murmured the appalled woman. "Abeout —why, it's abeout th' boys!"

"Of course, of course! What has God said about the boys? The archangel Michael gave it to me; but I couldn't read it. What saith the Lord? Ha! I know. I'm a prophet inspired—I am John, who was beheaded—I have risen from the dead! Thus is it written, William Farley is a captain of the Lord's host! Is that it? Ha! ha! ha!" and a wild demoniac laugh rang through the house.

"Let's go over an' tell Mary an' her father th' news," said the dazed woman, trying to release her arm.

"No more work for Deacon Farley—no more work for the deacon! Bibles and commentaries now all the day long, studying the divine oracles! Captain William Farley! Ha! ha! ha! that sounds good—Captain William Farley! Who would have thought it though—who would have thought it?"

"Wal, let me get reddy," quietly answered his wife, now releasing her arm from his deadly grasp with superhuman calmness. "Yew wait heer till I get reddy."

"Ha! ha! ha! Ho! ho! ho! Captain William Farley! Oh, it is grand—it's grand. Let's burn the old house! Who cares for the old house now? Down with the old house!" and the madman dashed for the door.

"Not neow, dear; not neow! Let's go deown t' th' village an' get th' men tew cum up an' help us burn it."

"That's it! You were always right. Of course, why not? Ho! ho! ho! Ha! ha! ha! Captain William Farley! Captain of the host of the Lord! Ha! ha! ha!"

"O, woman, great is thy faith!" She went out into

the night alone with him. He urged her on. He would leave her, springing forward in the darkness, screaming at the top of his voice, and then, swooping down with a shriek, he would drag her on. She had feared when they reached Abijah's that he would not pass; but he dashed silently ahead as if dreading to be seen. The gleaming lights in the village at last caught her eye. She had lived ten lives over during the few minutes she was with him alone. She coaxed him on into the store that she knew would be crowded at this hour by the farmers discussing the war. She got her hand on the latch—she could feel his hot breath upon her neck. Oh, could she ever open the door? It swung back at last, and, springing quickly in, she fell senseless in the midst of the astounded throng. Two eyes like balls of livid fire were seen glaring in the darkness outside for a moment, and then a shriek as of the damned, and the deacon disappeared. A dozen men or more started in pursuit; but, after visiting his house and searching half the night, had to return to their homes without finding him. Next morning the search was renewed. Lying on the bottom of the brook, with a huge stone fastened about his neck, they found him cold and still, in the very spot where Mary had fallen as a child.

> "Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass! He hates him
> That would upon the rack of this rough world
> Stretch him out longer!"

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE CANDID FRIEND.

Poor little Mary had heard the sad news almost as soon as Mrs. Farley herself. There are always in every community well-intentioned (?) folk who glory in being the self-commissioned prophets of evil. To such the death of a friend is a god-send. They revel in the thought that they can be the first to break the evil tidings. They gloat over the agony their message has produced. They would willingly sacrifice every comfort and place themselves at any conceivable inconvenience, if thereby they may become the heralds of the gospel of trouble. What would be an insurmountable obstacle in the way of their doing good, is an insignificant trifle in the way of doing harm. Such persons may not know it—may not be aware of the position they occupy in society, but they are nevertheless the despised of all men, the loathed of all women. Who has not been the victim of their kindly offices? Who is he that does not reckon among his friends (?) some social nuisance he cannot abate? He thinks it his duty—of course, it is always his duty—he thinks it his duty to put you on your guard! He does not believe that you are aware what your most intimate companion has been saying about you! Or, are you conscious that you are the subject of considerable attention in a quarter that means you no good? Such persons are always your warmest admirers! Certainly; it would be gross ingratitude to doubt it. It is of the love they bear you that they are under the painful sense of duty—always the painful sense of duty—of unburdening their minds. To say that such characters are in league with the spirit of confusion is a mild putting of

the case. When it is considered the evil they have done in the world—the hearts they have crushed—the graves they have digged and filled—the peace they have broken —the harmony they have disturbed, it is a mild putting of the case to say they are of their father the devil, who was a liar from the beginning. The "candid friend" is a liar by profession. To him honor is a meaningless phrase, manliness an empty sound. Social harmony is as hateful to him as purity to the impure. It is enough for him to know that amity prevails between man and man or woman and woman, for all the machinery at his command to be set in motion to mar it. Who has not known the candid friend, who has not felt his sting? We pray sometimes to be delivered from wars, from pestilence, and from sudden death. May the time hasten when in some revised liturgy we may read: "From the candid friend, the social monster, who for the love he bears us tortures us on the hot gridiron of a cold-blooded malignity—Good Lord deliver us!"

It was one of those dear creatures, with a heart overflowing with pity (?) who rushed with the utmost expedition to unburden her agitated mind to the poor Olivers, when the sad news of Harry's death became known in Woodside. Capt. Allen had written to several besides Deacon Farley. At the time that the deacon's alarmed and almost demented wife was leading her mad husband past Abijah's, the candid friend was inside relieving her mind.

Mary and her father had been conversing together in the twilight about the absent ones, when the door was suddenly jerked open and the candid friend, in the shape of a venerable maiden lady whose youthful aspirations had been prematurely nipped in the bud, entered, and with a sigh (bless her heart, always with a sigh) took a seat in

silence. They knew she had come for no good, she never had. With vague forebodings they held their breath. She had come, she said (and then there was a succession of sighs), with news—news from the war! Yes, from the war, and about the boys! Oh, well, what else could it be about if not about the boys? She did hope—in fact, she had been praying all the way over—that they might have strength given them in this hour of need. It was God's doings, foreordained from all eternity! Who would dare say to Him, What dost Thou? She did hope they would bear up under it—"whom the Lord loveth," and so forth. She considered it her duty; yes, her solemn but painful duty to let them know it at once. The doings of Providence were oft-times obscure, very dark, at least to us poor pilgrims in our blindness here below; but, well, it would be all for the best! "Harry's ded, kilt an' skulped by th' Injuns, an' William, why, he's runned away tew th' Monseers—worse nor ded, a desartar!"

* * * * * *

How often have we found all our preconceived opinions of men and things entirely disarranged by the stern logic of facts and experience? Abijah did not lose whatever little sense he had left, nor did Mary die. Judging by all the past history of the two men, Deacon Farley would have been the one we would have supposed would have stood sternly erect in the storm, while the poor whimpering widower, bemoaning for years the "wan's ded an' gone," would be crushed beneath the blow. It was not so. He reeled beneath it—intensified as it was by the gloating manner of its recital. The floodgates of grief were opened in mercy for the stricken child, and at last she came out from the fiery furnace like gold tried in the fire. She had loved the boy! Oh, how she loved her darling Hal! She had clung to him till her affection had bordered on

idolatry. He was so gentle to his little sister, so noble, so good, so true. She could not now recall that, in all their happy life together, he had ever spoken to her one word hasty or unkind. Then she would think of the night she had warned him against going. The soft touch of his fingers was in her hair again as she thought it all over, till the hot, scalding tears would flow afresh as a torrent. And he was dead, killed—murdered, mutilated! Her Hal killed? Oh, how cruel! Who could touch her Hal? Even the wild savages would have loved him had they known him as she did! And now he was gone—dead—and without a kiss from his Mary—his little Mary! And a fearful paroxysm of grief would surge through her. But as day followed day, she gradually came forth, all the womanly in her nature glorified by the fire of trial. William a deserter! Never! He might be dead, but alive or dead he had been true to his colors. That she knew. It was the work of their enemy. That she knew right well. Not a doubt remained on her mind as to that. She would save her William if he were yet alive. How? Ah, there came the difficulty. How save him? Yet she must and she would! Thus, while crushed with grief, the terrible thought that her lover was at the mercy of one who hated him with an intensity of passion she knew only too well, buoyed her up and saved her reason. The father was little changed. He had often said, when the boys left home, that he had suffered about all he could suffer. He had never been able to get beyond a certain point with his thinking. When he got that far he had to go back and commence it all over again. His darling Mary was now all that remained to him; but, as he could not add to his sufferings, neither could he add to his love for her. He gave no evidence by word or deed that she was any dearer to him now than she had ever been. Nor did he

try to cheer her in her sorrow. He seldom spoke about Harry, but sometimes would give his views about William. He had never liked the deacon's son, but he laughed the idea to scorn that the lad had deserted. "Why dezart?" That question settled it, for no one could answer the why. But, if the truth must be told, he secretly took comfort in the thought that he would now have Mary all to himself. But then he was only Abijah, and charity must be exercised towards him. Poor soul! He kept on at the "thinkin' an' thinkin'," and felt that as "electin' an' 'pintin'" had served him on the whole most shamefully, if they had for once done him a good turn, it was but a sorry offset to all the evil they had brought on his house. But the brave little girl rose daily to the responsibilities of the hour.

"Father," she said one evening after supper, "I am going up to see Mrs. Farley. Come with me!"

He said nothing. They started. Mary felt that something must be done, and done quickly. She had made up her mind what to do, had done it, and was now waiting developments. It was to talk the matter over with William's mother that we find them on the way to the deacon's.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

AFFAIRS IN LOUISBURG.

It was a trying hour to Duchambon, notwithstanding the brilliant repulse of the besiegers at Battery Island. Day by day the enemy crept nearer and nearer upon him. Their red-hot balls and bursting shells searched every nook and corner of the city, crashing through the houses,

many of which were a mass of ruins. The garrison had on the whole behaved well, thus far; but he was yet afraid to trust them. He would not, or could not forget their insubordination. He never could bring himself to believe that their constant clamoring for a sortie in force was not a cunningly-devised scheme to desert *en masse* to the enemy. Had he had more faith in his troops, or had they given him more reason to have had faith in them, the siege might have early been raised, and the invading army perhaps annihilated. Duchambon waited behind his guns, hoping against hope, as he prayed for reinforcements from France—praying that, if some help did not come, the raw Provincials, worried by delays, would in sheer disgust retire from before the town. He reckoned without his host. The ship *Vigilant*, sent by the king to his relief, fell an easy prey to the *vigilant* Warren. Nor was the raw army of invasion disheartened because the gates had not immediately been thrown open to them. Doubtless, many a New England lad had thought that all that was to be done was to go up and "possess the land." When, however, the land refused to be unceremoniously possessed, like the brave race from which they sprang, they doggedly sat down to reduce the position by the slow operations of a siege. Duchambon saw with dismay that the annoying obstinacy of the foe outside the walls was everyday becoming more obstinate. With greater dismay he hears of the capture of the long-looked-for succors from France. What is he to do? The shot from the enemy plunge around his head if he walks forth—they knock with incessant thuds at the gate—they plough through the streets—they tear through the houses of the fated town. Among his officers he has few friends and not a confidant. In this hour of trial he has but one man to stand by him, to cheer him, to enter into his feelings, and soothe his perturbed

heart. The faithful old priest never realized in all his life before the fearful responsibility attached to his holy calling than now. The friend of all, he was at everyone's call, at the service of the meanest private as well as the highest officer. He stood by the wounded at the ramparts, administered the *viaticum* to the dying, cheered and animated the hopes of the living. Duchambon was pacing the floor of his apartment on the afternoon of the day he learnt of the capture of the *Vigilant*. He was in a frenzy of grief and was completely unmanned.

"It is no use, it is no use!" he cried, frantically stamping the floor in impotent rage; "It is no use; I'll have to surrender and be forever disgraced in the eyes of my king!"

He walked the room with rapid strides.

"Surrender!" he fairly shrieked, clenching his fists; "surrender an army of France to a beggarly rabble of Provincials—an armed mob! Horrible!"

"Pardon me, your Excellency, if it be the will of the good God it cannot be helped!"

The kind-hearted priest had sought the Governor, knowing how desperately he must feel about the disaster to the *Vigilant*.

"Ha, my dear father, are you here? You heard me, then, did you? What's to be done—what's to be done, father?"

"Let us fight to the last extremity, and if, after all, we be compelled to surrender, then it must be the will of the good God!"

"True, true, dear father, true; but if it were a regular army that had come against us I would not feel the sting as I do!"

"Those heretics fight well; but do you not know that in the old days the good God permitted the idolater to afflict His people for their good? It may be even so

now!" and the abbè made the sign of the cross hurriedly as he breathed a prayer.

"Yes," responded Duchambon, with bitterness, remembering the mutinous spirit of his troops, but having no very definite idea of what the abbè referred to; "yes, it may be so now!"

He paced the floor again excitedly, but becoming calmer, stopped suddenly in front of his friend:

"Father, you are my only comfort in this trying hour. Pardon me for any act of impatience of which you may have known me to be guilty during those awful weeks. Give me your blessing, father, and the blessing of our holy mother, the Church!"

The Governor knelt on the floor It was an affecting scene. His proud head bowed before the aged man who, with outstretched hands, pronounced the blessing in a voice tremulous with tears. Rising from his knees the two friends seated themselves and conversed together for some time in low whispers, Duchambon becoming deeply interested as they proceeded.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

On the morning of the 11th June three guns were in position on the heights commanding Battery Island. The long-looked-for hour had come. The enemy is amazed. Day by day they had seen the frowning work above them approaching completion, but were powerless to prevent it. When the fog from the sea lifted itself from over Lighthouse Point this glorious morning of June three

hungry mouths were looking straight down on the doomed battery. The garrison knew well what was coming and prepared for the shock. As the fog rolled up in dense clouds and drifted out to sea, the silence was paralyzing. Every man held his breath, knowing it was the lull before the storm. At precisely twelve o'clock the loud report of a cannon from the Grand Battery broke over the bay. The echo died away among the hills. The smoke lifts itself slowly, weaving fantastic wreaths above the heads of the waiting troops. Then the ground shook, the waters trembled, as from the batteries in front of the town, the thirty guns of the Grand Battery, the three hungry mouths at Lighthouse Point, there belched forth one unbroken sheet of flame, smoke, with red-hot balls and screeching shells. The shores quivered as with an earthquake, when every French gun on the ramparts, from the King's Bastion all around to the Island Battery, roared out a terrific volley in reply. Gun answered gun, till the shock of the fierce cannonade became a continuous blare. The enemy was driven from his guns on the island by the plunging fire from above. Six cannons are dismounted. Not a man dare show his head. From the Lighthouse Battery all along around the harbor to the West Gate balls crashed, shells shrieked, red-hot shot seethed and hissed on their errands of death. Darkness at last came down over the horrible carnival, and the fire gradually slackened, and after a time all was still.

Immediately a Council of War was held in the Grand Battery, attended by Pepperrell and Warren. It was seen by all that the decisive hour had come. A general assault by sea and land was arranged. Warren had just been reinforced by three men-of-war. The bombardment was accordingly resumed on the following day.

Next morning everything was in readiness for the final

assault. The troops were paraded. Stirring addresses were made by Pepperrell and Warren. But Duchambon saw what was coming. Incompetent though he undoubtedly was, he realized the folly of further resistance. He had felt the weight of English metal, and now, broken in heart and crushed in spirit, he resolved to surrender forthwith upon whatever terms the victorious enemy were willing to grant. On the afternoon of the 15th, before the return of the commodore to his ship, a letter was received asking for a cessation of hostilities preparatory to a consideration of conditions of surrender. To this letter the following reply was immediately given:

"CAMP, 15th June, 1745.

"To GOVERNOR DUCHAMBON:

"We have yours of this date proposing a suspension of hostilities for such time as shall be necessary for you to determine upon the conditions of delivering up the garrison of Louisburg, which arrived at a happy juncture to prevent the effusion of Christian blood, as we were together and had just determined upon a general attack. We shall comply with your desire until 8 o'clock to-morrow morning; and if in the meantime you surrender yourselves prisoners of war, you may depend upon humane and generous treatment. We are your obedient, humble servants,

"PETER WARREN.

"WILLIAM PEPPERRELL."

On the following morning the Governor replied, stating the terms upon which he was willing to surrender, which terms were peremptorily rejected by the commanders of the besieging army, who forthwith submitted to Duchambon the only conditions they would consider. They were as follows:

"CAMP BEFORE LOUISBURG, 16th June, 1745.

"We have before us yours of this date, together with the several articles of capitulation on which you have proposed to surrender the town and fortifications of Louisburg, with the territories adjacent under your government, to his Brit-

tanick Majesty's obedience, to be delivered up to his said Majesty's forces now besieging said place under our command, which articles we can by no means accede to. But, as we are desirous to treat you in a generous manner, we do again make you an offer of the terms of surrender proposed by us in our summons sent you May 7th last, and do further consent to allow and promise you the following articles, namely:

"(1) That if your own vessels shall be found insufficient for the transportation of your persons and effects to France, we will provide such a further number of vessels as may be ufficient for that purpose; also any provisions necessary for the voyage that you cannot furnish yourselves with.

"(2) That all the commissioned officers belonging to the garrison, and the inhabitants of the town, may remain in their houses with their families, and enjoy the free exercise of their religion; and no person shall be suffer'd to misuse or molest any of them, till such time as they can be conveniently transported to France.

"(3) That the non-commissioned officers and soldiers shall immediately, upon the surrender of the town and fortress, be put on board his Brittanick Majesty's ships till they all be transported to France.

"(4) That all your sick and wounded shall be taken care of in the same manner as our own.

"(5) That the commander-in-chief, now in the garrison, shall have liberty to send off covered waggons, to be inspected only by one officer of ours, that no warlike stores may be contained in them.

"(6) That if there are any persons in the town or garrison which you shall desire may not be seen by us, they shall be permitted to go off masked.

"The above we do consent to and promise on your compliance with the following conditions, viz.:

"(1) That the surrender and due performance of every part of the aforesaid premises be made and completed as soon as possible.

"(2) That as security for the practical performance of the same, the Island Battery, or one of the batteries of the town, shall be deliver'd, with all the artillery and warlike stores thereunto belonging, into the possession of his Brittanick Majesty's troops, before six of the clock this afternoon.

"(3) That his Brittanick Majesty's ships of war, now lying before the port, shall be at liberty to enter the harbor of Louisburg, without any molestation, as soon after six of

the clock this afternoon as the commander-in-chief of the said ships shall think fit.

"(4) That none of the officers, soldiers, nor inhabitants in Louisburg, who are subjects of the French King, shall take up arms against his Brittanick Majesty, or any of his allies, until after the expiration of the full term of 12 months from this time.

"(5) That all subjects of his Brittanick Majesty who are now prisoners with you shall be immediately delivered up to us.

"In case of your non-compliance with these conditions, we decline any further treaty with you on the affair, and shall decide the matter by our arms, and are, &c.,

"Your humble servants,

"P. WARREN,
"W. PEPPERRELL."

CHAPTER L.

THE SURRENDER.

DUCHAMBON had no election. He submitted to the terms, and, on the 17th day of June, the renowned fortifications of Louisburg fell into the hands of the brave little New England army. The exultant troops marched into the town against which for weeks they had hurled their missiles of death. Their amazement was unbounded as they gazed upon its strength. "God has gone out of His way in a remarkable and almost miraculous manner to incline the hearts of the French to give up and deliver this strong city into our hands," was the thought of some. "Foreordained from all eternity," was the conviction of many. General Pepperrell, with his strong faith in Jehovah, was more than ever convinced as he scrutinized

the works that the Lord God of Sabaoth had been with his ill-disciplined troops all along.

The French commander bore up under the disgrace doggedly, though smarting keenly. The Abbè Gondi availed himself of the courtesy of the conquerors, and, in company with the other *religieuse*, Marie and her mother, were concealed from the prying gaze of the soldiers as they were sent masked on board of the ships lying in the harbor.

It was a day of wild frolic and rejoicing. The grand fellows who for so many weary days and nights had toiled on in the cold, dragging cannon through bogs and morasses and over boulders of granite—had toiled on in the trenches—had toiled behind their rude earthworks, now sat down within the captured town to revel over their well-earned rest. Joking, laughing, singing, shouting, chaffing, there was not a sour face or an angry look to be met with among the rough but honest boys as they went prowling from point to point, eagerly scanning every corner of the redoubtable stronghold. Even Chaplain M'Donald forgot his canting whine for the nonce, and bore up with wonderful composure under the chaff and taunts of the boisterous soldiers, as they cried :

"Whar's th' hatchet ?"

"Deown with them thar imajess !"

"With these mine hands will I hew the ïdols of Rome !"

He had never received even ordinary respect from either officers or men since his disgraceful cowardice at the burial of poor Harry and his murdered companions.

It was the afternoon of the day succeeding the capitulation that Pepperrell, in company with a number of his staff, were seated enjoying a social chat in Duchambon's

old quarters. A French prayer-book was being rendered into English by one of the number, while the others interjected remarks or suggested doubts as to the faithfulness of the translation. A good deal of innocent mirth was being indulged in (though, to the credit of all, let it be recorded that no ridicule was being thrown on the sacred words), when an orderly at the door intimated to the general that there was a man waiting who urgently requested a private interview.

"Let him pass," said the commander-in-chief carelessly, as the reading thus interrupted was resumed.

The orderly returned in a few moments saying that the man had been a prisoner, and persisted in begging a private interview with the general.

"Oh, send him in at once. If he don't come, force him. He can't have anything so *very* private that we can't all hear it."

A minute afterwards a shuffling step was heard, and a soldier entered, haggard in appearance, with a wild, scared look, but in the stealthy glance of whose eyes there was a cunning and treachery that stamped the man at sight as a villain. Captain Allen gazed at the figure before him with blank amazement in every line of his handsome face.

"In the name of the seven deadly sins of which we have just been reading," he exclaimed, "who have we here?"

The stranger saluted the company, and shuffled over against the wall as if seeking support for his tottering body.

"Well, my good man," said the general kindly, "who are you, and what do you want with me?"

"Waterman—can it be—possible! I thought you dead!" interrupted Allen in astonishment.

"Not ded—oh, no, not ded, capen—purty near it tho'. I've ben havin' a hard time of it heer 'mong th' Monseers!" and the fellow leered at his old captain with a look of familiarity that set every one in a roar.

"Well, well, I think I remember the name," put in Pepperrell when the merriment had in part subsided; "now tell us quick whatever you have to say, and be off!"

"I wunt ter say suthin' ter yerself alone!"

"Nonsense! Out with whatever you have to say, and be off!"

The man looked at Captain Allen, then at the general, then back again at the captain, and finally blurted out:

"Wal, ef 'taint no yeuse in tryin' ter tell it private like, I must eout with it—thar's wan of our fellers pertends he wus tuk prisoner, but he's a desartar!"

"Who—who?" shouted all with one voice.

"William Farley!"

Captain Allen sprang to his feet: "Has my reason left me, or what has come over me that I have never once thought of Farley since the moment we entered the city? General, William Farley is one of my men. I knew him from a child. It breaks my heart to say it, but what this man tells is only too true. Farley deserted early in the siege, and although I thought of him every day for weeks on account of his dejected parents—a God-fearing couple, his father a deacon fit to preach the good news—I have forgotten him till this moment with the excitement attending the victory!"

Allen was always cool, but now he was unusually excited. The general's face took on a grave and severe look.

"Captain Allen, have Farley placed under immediate arrest," he commanded. "I will question this man while you are seeing to it."

As the officer thus addressed strode from the apartment, the general continued :

"Waterman, how come you to be taken prisoner ?"

"Wal, yew see, I went eout fur a walk and thort I'd keep clus tew th' boys, but afore I knowed whar I wus I wuz nowhar ! Lost me way. Furst thing I know'd a duzen big Monseers sprung eout of th' bush and, as quick ez nothin', I straightened wan eout, an' was tryin' tew straighten 'nother wan, when a queer feelin' cum inter me hed, and next thing I knows I was heer !"

"Yes, what day of the month was that ?"

"What day—I forget th' day. Lemme see ; jest th' day Farley wus let go !"

"Yes ; now tell us how you know Farley deserted ?"

"Wal, I see'd him cum in !"

"You saw him come in ? You a prisoner, and saw a deserter come in ?"

"Wal, I wuz—lemme see—they wuz jest takin' on me ter th' dunjun when I heers a noise. I looks areound an' what shuld I see but Farley ahandin' of a paper to th' sentry !"

"A paper ?"

"Yez sur, shure's yer live, I see him ahandin' a paper tew th' sentry. Next thing I knows I wuz in th' dunjun whar th' boys fund me !"

"Was Farley put in the dungeon, too ? Do you know what was done with him ?"

"Dunjun ! Oho ! dunjun, indeed ! Not he. I doan't want ter say tew much agen him, but I'll die fust afore I'll be tellin' lies. He never see'd th' in'ards of a dunjun all th' time he wus heer !"

"How do you know that ?"

"Heow dew I kno' it ? Beggin' yer parding fur bein' so bold, haint I got eyes 'n ears ter see and heer ? Didn't

he be atellin' on me heow he hez spent his time with th' Monseers!"

The officers looked at each other incredulously. For some minutes there was silence. The bare thought that any of the army should have acted the part of traitor had in it something so exasperating to the brave men who had borne the heat and burden of the day that for the moment no one could utter a word.

"Well, well, gentlemen," at last broke in Pepperrell, but clearly as agitated as he ever permitted himself to be; "well, well, we'll settle this sad affair to-morrow. It grieves my heart to hear such a story about one of my brave boys. But we'll see, we'll see."

Waterman was removed to the guard-house, and the party broke up.

CHAPTER LI.

LIGHT ON DARK PLACES.

IMMEDIATELY upon the fall of Louisburg General Pepperrell despatched a cruiser to Boston to apprise Gov. Shirley of the news. The vessel had been at sea but a few hours when she spoke another from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on its way to the seat of war. It was a joyful meeting on the waters, and cheer followed cheer as long as the two vessels were within hailing of each other.

When the events recorded towards the close of our last chapter were transpiring within the city, the New Hampshire cruiser was casting anchor in the harbor. The troops were wild with excitement at the thought of hear-

ing from home, and the wharves were crowded to greet the boat that had rapidly put off for the shore.

General Pepperrell had scarcely stretched himself upon his camp-bed after the departure of his officers than an orderly entered bearing a packet of letters.

"Has there a vessel arrived?" he asked eagerly. "How fortunate!"

"Yes, sir, dropped anchor a few minutes ago!"

"Well, God be praised," he soliloquized when he was again alone. "God be praised for his great mercy! The dear ones at home little imagine what news is on the way to them!"

He opened letter after letter, smiling as he read some, while the tears trickled down his cheeks at the contents of others. Precious ones were these last, and precious were they to the noble man who, after the shock of battle, was lying here in peace enjoying the much-needed rest after weeks of torturing anxiety. He laid these sweet epistles by themselves on the bed beside him; they were too dear to his manly heart to mingle with the others as he proceeded to read. As he glanced at one he did so with considerable curiosity. It was in a lady's hand and the writing unknown to him. He opened it and glanced at the signature. Then he read.

"Can this be true—am I in a dream?" The always calm and imperturbable officer sprang to his feet.

"Impossible! I have fallen asleep as I was reading. Let me see," and he sat at the table and spread out the letter before him. He read it over twice, then bowed his head upon his hands. It was fully an hour before he moved, and when he lifted his face a groan escaped him as if wrung from the deepest depths of his heart.

"I see it all now! Heaven help me to do my duty." Calling an orderly he sent him off for Capt. Allen.

"This is astounding," he murmured to himself pacing the floor, "this is astounding. This is the blackest deed of villainy by man upon his fellow-man I ever heard of." He walked the apartment with rapid strides, appalled and confused. He was still excitedly muttering when Capt. Allen abruptly entered. The general turned towards him, all his emotion gone.

"Well, captain, any news of the deserter?" he asked carelessly.

"We have got him, general; we have got him!"

"We shall try this man immediately, captain. Let all the officers be summoned at once. See to this, if you please."

"I will, sir, instantly. It is a disgrace to our flag that must be dealt with most summarily!"

"Certainly, certainly!" was the calm reply.

Scarcely half an hour subsequently the general is seated in the midst of his officers with all that dignity and grace for which he was so distinguished. No one who looked at the pale, serious face would have imagined it possible that but a few moments ago he had been swayed by the deepest emotion. The court was formally opened. Private Farley stood before them charged with desertion. Waterman again told his story, mainly as at first. Capt. Allen, who appeared much agitated, was the object of general sympathy. The prisoner belonged to his company, and had been the only man in the whole army who had acted disgracefully during the siege. The captain appeared to feel keenly that one of his brave lads, of whom he was so justly proud, should stand here arraigned for so foul and infamous a crime. The prisoner and Waterman were at length removed by the guard, and the general proceeded to read the evidence.

"Gentlemen (there was an unnatural huskiness in his

voice as he spoke), you have heard the evidence. I wish each now to express himself fully, freely, frankly!"

But there did not appear to be anything to express. All were of one mind—*Farley was worthy of death!* Some were indeed for recommending the unfortunate youth to mercy, now that the war was over; but Capt. Allen, with tears in his eyes, thought he should be shot without delay, as a warning to the troops. The war was over, he said, but he would remind the court that the army might have to remain here for some months yet, and it would be a salutary lesson to have the deserter shot at once, lest, when the excitement of the siege had died away, others might be tempted by their clemency in some measure to follow his example. Yes," he concluded with trembling voice, "it is the will of God according to His purpose—*Farley must die!*"

"Gentlemen, are you all done?" asked the general in subdued tones.

Yes, they were all done; they had nothing to say.

"Orderly, have the sergeant of the guard turn out his men and await further orders."

When again he spoke it was with extreme difficulty. He admitted the evidence to be overwhelming. "Nothing can save the prisoner from death—and," he paused, fixing his eyes upon his officers with that indescribable look they had so often seen in the hour of battle, "and he shall be put to death if the evidence be true!"

There was profound silence.

"If the evidence be true, gentlemen, nothing can save the prisoner!"

Then silence again as of the grave.

"Captain Allen," and Pepperrell turned abruptly to that officer, "Captain Allen, have you any theory by which you would explain to this court the treachery of the prisoner?"

The captain had none—it was to him a mystery.

"None?"

"No, none!"

Then silence again as of the grave.

"Captain Allen!"

The general's voice was thick, and he spoke with labored difficulty.

"*Captain Allen, I place you under arrest. Deliver up your sword!*"

Every officer sprang to his feet instantaneously, while pallid, and as if frozen to his seat, the astounded captain glared wildly from one to another.

"Be seated, gentlemen; be seated!" thundered Pepperrell. "Orderly, call the guard!"

In a moment the sergeant and his men filed into the apartment. "Sergeant, Captain Allen is under arrest. Remove him to his quarters, and place a guard at the door. The captain will deliver up all letters, papers, and documents of any kind and every description which *you* may find, mark me—which *you* may find in his possession; and you will deliver them to me without a moment's unnecessary delay. Remove the prisoner!"

Amazed, stupefied, without uttering a word, the disgraced man was divested of his sword and marched out surrounded by the guard.

CHAPTER LII.

MORE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS.

"GENTLEMEN, this is the saddest hour of my life!"

All who looked upon Pepperrell's blanched face, the muscles of which were now nervously twitching, realized the truthfulness of his words. Gen. Waldo was the first to speak:

"This astounds and overwhelms us, sir. Will you please explain?"

Pepperrell bowed his head on the table and groaned aloud as he had previously done when alone.

"You must wait, gentlemen; you must wait," he mut tered, not looking up. "I must have a few hours rest now. At nine of the clock to-morrow morning, after guard-mounting, the court will reassemble. You must leave me now—leave me, I pray you, without further questions!"

All arose, deeply touched by the general's emotion, and retired.

The consternation among the troops, when it became known that Capt. Allen had been placed under arrest, amounted almost to frenzy. For a time there was danger of an outbreak. He was a popular officer. His own men idolized him. He was respected by his fellow-officers. He had proved himself brave. He had been faithful in the discharge of every duty. Mutterings deep and loud were heard; but all at length came to remember that the commander-in-chief was known to be incapable of a rash or an unjust action.

Long before the time appointed the officers, the following morning, were pacing up and down in front of the

general's quarters. Each one had a theory of his own on the startling events of yesterday, a theory to be dismissed as soon as broached. The hour arrived and every officer was in his place. Deep anxiety was depicted on their faces. The gallant Waldo gave evidence by his worn look and bloodshot eyes that he had passed a sleepless night. Pepperrell was now sternly calm. Every trace of his former emotion was gone. Commodore Warren sat by his side, with the frank open face of a soldier of the sea.

"Let the prisoners be brought before us," commanded the general.

Pale, haggard, and wretched, Capt. Allen, escorted by two soldiers, entered, followed soon after by Farley and and Waterman. Pepperrell arranged a formidable pile of papers before him on the table.

"Gentlemen!"

The agony of suspense had become paralyzing, and, as each officer bent toward the speaker, their deep breathing sounded strangely unnatural.

"Gentlemen," commenced the general slowly and as if to weigh every word, "I have ordered Captain Allen under arrest for being guilty, as I at present judge, of an act, the basest and most dastardly that ever blackened the fair name of a soldier!"

The officers gasped and bent forward over the table, the commodore alone, with the habits of the service upon him, remaining perfectly unmoved.

"The prisoner Farley," continued the general, "before leaving home was betrothed to a young woman in his native village. They had been brought up together as children. Deeply attached to him, this young woman refused an offer of marriage, privately made to her by Captain Allen, a few weeks previous to starting for the

seat of war. Incensed at her refusal, Allen vowed vengeance on her lover, exacting at the same time from the girl a promise of secrecy, with the threat that if divulged it would be worse for all parties. Immediately upon the arrival of the troops at Canso, in order to carry out the more effecually his base designs, he sent a letter to this young woman by the hands of a sailor whom he had liberally paid, no doubt, for the service. This letter was a demand for a lock of her hair to be sent by her, accompanied by a letter breathing love and devotion. Her letter was to be an exact copy in her own hand of one which he enclosed for that purpose. It seems amazing that any sensible young woman should have complied with such a request, but with that we have nothing to do. Here are the letters; this, the original, in Capt. Allen's handwriting, and this, an exact copy, in the handwriting of the young woman, having been found last night among Capt. Allen's papers. I will read it:

"WOODSIDE, April 12th, 1745.

"MY DEAREST CAPTAIN ALLEN:

"I embrace an unexpected opportunity of sending you these few lines with a ringlet of my hair as a token of my undying love. Be true to me, as I will be true to you until death. No one stands, or can stand between us. William Farley's attentions have only been tolerated till you can claim me as your own. On your return from the war I will be yours forever. In great haste, but with deepest love,

"I am affectionately,

"MARY OLIVER."

A wild, piercing shriek followed the reading of the letter, and William Farley, swaying from side to side, fell senseless on the floor between his guards. He was quickly removed, and the general proceeded:—

"No woman would or could write a letter like that. It

bears on its face the proof of its forgery, even if we had not the original here in Allen's own hand."

Passing the letters to the commodore he continued :—

"The girl did as she was commanded, foolishly, but perhaps fearing that a refusal would bring ruin upon her lover. With a woman's instinct, however, she appealed to the heart of the sailor who had been Allen's agent. She wrote a letter to her brother, who, it appears, was aware of the captain's attentions to his sister, as well as of the threats that had been made against young Farley. In this letter the girl exposed Allen's treachery and warned her brother to put Farley on his guard. The sailor, it would seem, was false to his promise, for this letter, addressed to Harry Oliver, is here before me. In the meantime the late, and deeply lamented, Rev. John Fenwick, of Woodside, realizing from the state of the young woman's mind that her lover must be in danger, wrote two letters about the matter, one to Capt. Allen, the other to Chaplain McDonald. Both letters are here at my hand, and I shall take care to find out how the chaplain's letter came into Allen's possession."

CHAPTER LIII.

THE DARKNESS GONE.

Not a word was spoken, and Pepperrell, after a momentary pause, resumed :—

"Mr. Fenwick's letter to Allen is an earnest request to look after William Farley. That the request was never acted upon we all have evidence in the fact that the captain took sides against Farley in the matter of this Water-

man. There is some obscurity here which will have to be cleared up." At a sign to the guard the now trembling Waterman was led forward.

"Private Waterman, you have been engaged in this foul conspiracy. You may save your miserable life by telling the truth now if you can. Let us hear what you have to say for yourself?"

The wretch glanced at his old captain, but seeing that he could no longer get aid in that quarter, coward-like forsook his companion in crime, as he whined out:

"Th' capen he hired me tew list. I wus tew hev so much besides me pay ef I did well, an' ef I didn't dew well, so much. I wus t' pick at Farley an' get him to strike ef I could, an' then ef I could kill him th' capen promised to git me orf. I did th' best I could, the capen givin' me a knife o' his'n, but I missed strikin' in sech a way ez tew finish him. Th' last time Farley bruised me, the capen sez, sez he, yer a fool! I swore that suthin' would be dun. I didn't like tew kill him in cold blood for fear th' capen couldn't git me orf. Sez I, git me help. Sez he what help dew yer want? Git me a man an' we'll git Farley eout o' th' way. Heow, sez he? We'll kerry him ez clus up tew Looisburg ez we ken, sez I, an' tie him tew a tree whar he'll die ef the Monseers doan't git him. Good, sez he, and we'll say he desarted. Of coorse, sez I. Ef yew'll git him eout o' th' way yew'll get so much arter th' war, an' ef yew doan't, says he, yew'll get nothin'. So he got me a kupple o' sailor chaps, an' we watched Farley an' th' boy Oliver start, an' we runned orf, but we thort we hed lost them. Heowsumever, bimeby we heerd th' tew atalkin' purty leoud, an' afore we know'd nothin' Farley cum arunnin' an' atarin' right inter th' bush whar we wus, an' I guv him a knock on th' hed an' deown he went. We hed orful work of it apullin'

an' ahaulin' on him along, hevin' t' give him a knock neow an' agen fur tew keep him still. Jest ez we thort we had him fur 'nough, bang goes a gun, and abeout twinty Monseers wus clus on us quicker'n wink. The tew sailors runned faster'n chain-lightnin' an' got orf, but th' Monseers guv me a prod with a bagnot so I stopt arunnin'. They kerried Farley in, but druv me at th' point o' th' bagnot. I hed hard times in heer, but then I allers did hev hard times, and neow I s'pose I'll be shot!"

"Shot! You shot, you wretch?" cried Pepperrell, purple with suppressed rage at the cold-blooded malignity of the brute; "shoot you, you fiend,—give a soldier's death to you? You shall be flogged like a dog and drummed out of the army forthwith! Remove the animal, sergeant, his presence is pollution!"

In a moment the general was as calm as before, and proceeded to still further unfold the case. Picking up a letter from the table, he said:

"Now here is the young girl's letter to her brother. It was also found among the prisoner's papers:

"WOODSIDE, April 12th, 1745.

"MY DEAR, DEAR HAL:

"For the love of God and all you hold dear, watch William now and warn him. Capt. Allen has made me write him a letter which I know he means to show William so as to turn him against me. I have no time now to explain. Warn William and tell him it's false.

"Your loving sister,

"MARY."

"There it is!" cried one of the officers; "there it is. That explains one point to me. Here is another link in the chain! This, no doubt, is the letter Captain Allen took from a sailor in my presence at the Grand Battery. The sailor was flogged, I believe, through the prisoner's

instrumentality. I never could understand why he was so vindictive towards the poor fellow; I understand it all now!"

"Yes," went on the general, "I am sorry for the poor sailor, but glad to find there was one honest man in this disgraceful business. But," and he glanced at a paper which he had just selected from the heap before him, "the chain is now to be completed. Here is a letter received last night direct from New Hampshire. It is an agonizing appeal to myself from the young woman to save her lover, if alive. It came just at the right juncture, evidently ordered by Him who doeth all things well."

"WOODSIDE, New Hampshire, June 9th, 1745.

"*To General Pepperrell:*

"You must pardon the liberty which I, a perfect stranger, take in addressing you. I am only a young girl—you are a great soldier; but I know that you will listen to my story, for I have prayed long and earnestly about it. My mother is dead, my father's heart is broken, my darling only brother has been killed in the war, and my lover and intended husband is charged with being a deserter. Oh, general, for the love of heaven, save him. His name is William Farley. He is *not* a deserter. He loves me, and I love him with all my heart. Captain Allen swore to me he would ruin him. Captain Allen made love to me, and then made me promise with fearful threats never to tell. He swore he would murder William if I told it. My darling brother went to the war to try and save William, and now he is dead—murdered, and they say William is a deserter. No, general, no, William is not a deserter. Whatever has happened to him has been planned by Captain Allen, that I know. I send you the letter he made me copy and send him. Oh, general, if William dies my heart must break, my mind must give way. Will you save him, general; for the love of God, will you save him? I can write no more.

"Respectfully,

"MARY OLIVER.

When the general laid down the letter on the table there was not a dry eye before him. The foul baseness of the heartless conspiracy shocked their high sense of manhood, while the child-like pleadings of the broken-hearted girl called away their thoughts to their own homes. There were daughters there, dearly beloved, longing for their return. What if it was my own child? many a one of them said to himself. And the tears coursed down their bronzed cheeks. The commander-in-chief alone was composed. He had schooled himself for the ordeal.

CHAPTER LIV.

BROUGHT TO BAY.

When the excitement had in some measure subsided, the general, looking at the disgraced and fallen officer before him, asked him if he had anything to say in defence of his foul and baseless conduct; if so, he was at liberty to speak.

"I have played a desperate game, general, and have lost. I have ruined myself for this world—blasted my fair name, and disgraced my office, because my head was turned by a pretty face. I fought against it long, but a man can't resist what has been ordained from all eternity. I have lived for weeks in a state bordering on insanity. Now the crash has come. Let it come! I couldn't help it. I but followed my destiny. Not an act of mine in all this business but had been ordered. This thought only keeps me from madness—I but followed an irresistable fate!"

Pepperrell bit his lip. He believed in the doctrines himself as well as the others; but his nature recoiled from such logic.

"Remove the prisoners, sergeant, and have Private Farley before us!"

When William entered the commander-in-chief rose, ignoring all etiquette, discipline, and everything of that nature, as, sinking the officer in the man, he grasped the youth's hand exclaiming: "You have been the innocent victim of a base and fiendish plot. You have suffered much, and now all the amends that can be made shall be made. You will be sent home to the noble girl, of whom I have no doubt you are every way worthy. As soon as the necessary papers are made out you will be honorably discharged from the army."

"O, general, I don't know what to say!" the amazed lad stammered out, scarce realizing whether he was asleep or awake.

"You need not say a word, my man, or try to now; you can go," and, with muttered thanks, William withdrew. But he could not imagine he was actually free as he emerged into the open air. He had but a few hours ago been set at liberty, only to find himself imprisoned again; and now he could not, or would not, believe but before long he might find himself shackled afresh. He grasped Mary's letters, given him by the general, and stared stupidly as the boys clustered around him. Pale and weak, he was but the shadow of the robust young soldier who, but a few weeks before, had jumped into the waves down yonder at Gabarus Bay. But he was free. Yet he was not so sure of that. He would move a step or two, and then look awkwardly at his comrades, many of whom, with tears of joy and pity, turned away to hide their emotion.

"Come with me, William; come to our quarters," shouted one.

"No sech thing, he's tew cum with me. I hev more right tew him!" cried another.

"I'll tak him!" exclaimed a third, suiting the action to the word as he led William off amidst cheers.

"Never mind, William, me boy; never mind neow," as he drew him along. "Never mind neow, me lad, it's all over at last. Yew've had a hard time o' it; harder'n the most o' us; but it'll be all right neow."

William learned for the first time on his way along full particulars about dear Harry's tragic death. He had immediately, when released, when the army entered the city, set out to find him; but, owing to his weakness and the unnatural excitement prevailing, all he could learn was that Harry was not there. Now he heard it all. His kind-hearted comrade did his best to soften the story; but William would hear it, every word; nothing must be hidden. He could not suffer more than he had, he exclaimed in anguish when the sad story was finished; but oh, had the dear boy died knowing the truth it would not be so hard.

Arriving at their quarters, William read the letters he held in his hand, but said nothing. He could say nothing. He laid them down beside him in the berth and wept like a child. To think that he ever should have doubted Mary! The thought pierced him like a sword to the heart. And then he recalled dear Hal's tender solicitude. He remembered what he had said to him the morning they sailed from Canso; he thought of the parting in the woods, and all the horrible events which followed thick around him rose like a frightful dream, and he quivered and shook in every limb, swayed by the seething agony of his sorrow. The kindly soldier had gone out, leaving

him alone with his grief and joy. He picked up Mary's letter to the general and read it again and again. "Oh, my Mary; my dearest, my darling Mary! What would you think of me if you knew all?"

He was aroused by the trampling of feet as of running men. He paid no attention to it at first; but, becoming conscious that something unusual was going on, he went to the door. A soldier was dashing past as he came out.

"What is the matter?" cried William, in alarm, as thoughts of more trouble to himself rushed again into his mind.

"They say Capt. Allen hez shot himself!" was the hurried reply as the man dashed on.

William followed as rapidly as his strength permitted. It was only too true. Brought to bay—his desperate scheme frustrated—his foul plot exploded—tortured by remorse, and maddened by unrequited love, which had brought shame, ruin, and disgrace upon him, the fallen officer had put an end to his blighted life, rushing unprepared into the presence of Him whom he had so greviously offended, whose laws he had so wantonly broken.

An open letter lay in his berth which he had pencilled to his general before committing the awful deed. It was a terrible letter, blood-curdling with the severity of its logic. The proposition was stated in all its naked hatefulness—"God hath foreordained all things whatsoever cometh to pass," therefore he had himself but acted the part which from all eternity it had been arranged he should act. He had been led on, and he had passively followed. One thing alone remained to be done which he felt assured had been also pre-arranged. It would soon be done, and then the tragedy of his life was over. As to the future he had no fears. Why should he have fears? "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of

His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death." It was preposterous to suppose that anything that he had done, or could do, should change God's immutable decrees!

CHAPTER LV.

HOMEWARD BOUND!

On the third day of July the joyous news of the fall of Louisburg reached Boston. The city went wild with rejoicing. Every face glowed. Men hailed each other who had never met before. They hustled along good-naturedly. They shouted themselves hoarse. The night following, the town was a sea of light. Not a window but shot forth streams of gladness into the dark. The news spread to the suburbs. Out into the country—out over pleasant fields—out over dusty roads—out over murmuring brooks it flew on the wings of the wind, sending up shouts as it flew, and songs of praise as it ran, unto Him who had given them the victory! As it went surging along over hill and dale, it tarried fondly at Woodside. The simple-hearted villagers knew not what to say or do about it. Men embraced each other in the fields or by the roadside, wherever they met. They had never done the like before, and felt very sheepish and ashamed when they thought of it. Women wept. They had often done the like before, and did not feel a bit ashamed when they thought of it, but wept again. The children cried and laughed in one breath, and when *they* thought of it, com-

menced the performance *de nova*. Poor Mrs. Farley could neither weep nor rejoice. She had wept till the fountain of her tears was dried up. She could not rejoice; for her darling boy she might never see this side of eternity, or, if she did, it would be with an indelible stain upon his name. Her husband filled a dishonored grave—pity her!—how could she rejoice? But there was one who could hope and did hope! With her heart crushed and bleeding for her idolized Harry, Mary Oliver had come up out of the depths of her sorrow with a profound conviction that light was about to burst at last on the darkness. She had an abiding faith that William would return, and not only return, but return without a stain upon his name. Her father could see nought but more trouble ahead of them. If the war were over, the boys would not be able to come home before next winter, and by that time many of them would be dead. But the little woman would rally him about his always being a prophet of evil; and then she would suddenly think of her darling Hal, lying cold in an unknown grave. Then she would rush to her chamber and her knees. Ay, her knees! Oh, power of faith in the unseen and eternal, thou art of God! Not faith in the whimsical caprices of an arbitrary tyrant, who, with the malignity of a Nero, creates sufferings and then gloats like a horrible gorgon in blood; but faith in the divine compassion of One, who "as a father pitieth them that fear Him." Why is it that instinctively we cry out of the deep abyss of our sorrow to something above, exterior to ourselves, though through it all we may ignore Him who alone can help us? Why is it? Why, when dashed to the earth beneath the crushing wheels of a hostile environment, our hearts shriek aloud for aid, for help—a help that we know our fellows cannot give us? Why is it? Why not, then, cry to the gods whom

we have served so faithfully? Why not invoke their pity in this hour of horror? Why not? Our god of pleasure, of wealth, of fame,—why is it we call not upon them when darkness comes, when the tempest smites us, and we stand naked and alone with the hurtling storm? Why is it? Where is the little fellow then who revels in primordial germs and basks in protoplasm? Surely, if he can make a monkey out of an oyster and a man out of the monkey, he can make an angel out of the man, and thus lift him above his trouble? "Cry aloud for he is a god!" Does he not answer? Is your heart still sore? Are your tears not chased away by his smiles? Cry again! Cry louder, "either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked!"

Great was the excitement in Woodside, great was the fear which followed. Some hearts were doomed to anguish. They knew that. Whose, however, they dared not think; and thus they waited, unlike the deacon or Captain Allen, but with the most reckless inconsistency, praying and hoping, hoping and praying, that what they dreaded but feared to breathe to their dearest friend, might not prove true.

Meanwhile preparations for great joy to some of those longing ones is being enacted in Louisburg. William Farley is honorably discharged from the army, and is now on board the vessel in the harbor waiting for the favoring breeze to waft him to his Mary! Had he been false to her, he thought? He ought to have known her better. But the captain is on deck. William's cheek is fanned by the warm breath of the evening breeze as it comes stealing down from the Green Hills. The anchor is weighed. The white sails are flung out to the wind. A cheer, and they sweep in a graceful circle past the Island Battery, where

the boys crowd the parapet, waving their caps and shouting farewells. Away out upon the singing waves. Away out till the grim fortress looks like a speck on the horizon. Away, away, where the wind sighs through the rigging, and the gallant little vessel dips gaily on. Away, away, towards home, towards mother and Mary!

CHAPTER LVI.

HOME! HOME!

A PLEASANT voyage with a favoring breeze, and the trim little cruiser dropped anchor in the habor of Portsmouth. Great was the joy in the village at seeing a live soldier straight from the war! William was overwhelmed with questions as he stepped upon the wharf. He was, however, soon rescued by the captain of the schooner who, knowing his weak state of health, led him unceremoniously away to his own house. The afternoon was far advanced, but the captain informed the now nervously-anxious youth that there would be no difficulty in finding a conveyance in the morning to Harmony. Agreeably surprised, then, he was, we may be sure, when some short time later the skipper came hurriedly into the house with the news that there was a team ready to start, and if William wanted to go, why, he could go. Wanted to go! He should think he did want to go, and the captain's good wife might plead to the walls, William never heard a word she was saying.

The drive along the pleasant road, if the never-ceasing

flow of his friend's questions be not taken into account, was very enjoyable. William answered the incessant volleys of questions as well as he could; but in sheer self-defence at last dropped into monosyllables. They arrived in Harmony far on in the night; but the driver knew well where to go. Many a time had he heard the blacksmith and his wife speak of the two Woodside boys who had stopped with them on their way to the wars—glad enough will they be to see one of them back. The waggon drew up before the door, and the man springing out ran into the house.

"I should think so! I should think so!" William heard a cheery voice exclaiming. Then there was a sound of footsteps in the dark. "Whar's he?" It was the same honest, hearty man who had greeted him here weeks previously. There was a tremendous squeeze of the hand in the darkness.

"Whar's them thar imajess o' Rome?" cried a voice somewhere near.

"Oh, you rogue, Ned, are you there?" answered William, greatly amused.

"Away with yew, boy; away with yew," shouted the smith, pretending to make passes towards the apprentice. "Never yew mind him. He's th' trial o' me life, allers in mischief."

There were sundry low, chuckling noises heard not very far off, and presently William found his hand grasped as in a vice. The dear old woman's eyes filled with tears as, meeting William at the door, she exclaimed, "Whar's t'other wan?" She saw what she had done in a instant, but with womanly tact commenced chattering away most vigorously about other things as she prepared supper. The questions he had again to answer to were but a repetition of what he had been answering for hours. The

Rev. Donald McDonald was here, however, the principal theme. The villagers had learned during his absence that the sun rose and set just the same as if he had never gone away. William found from sly hints and mysterious insinuations that Ned was not now alone in his scepticism "abeout them thar imajess o' Rome!"

It was long past midnight before the tired youth dropped asleep. The exciting experiences of the last few days made him wakeful. He knew nothing of the state of affairs at home. He had not heard of his father's death, but the boys had told him how suddenly the dear old pastor had died. He could not bring himself to believe it possible that he was so near his dear ones. As he began to doze some new thought would strike him, and he would be as wide awake as ever. Bright and early, however, he was moving in the morning and, after a slight breakfast, was again seated in the same waggon that had conveyed him from Portsmouth. The rough but honest driver had determined to have all the honor to himself of carrying home "the first man from the wars!"

"I'll send yew sum o' them thar imajess o' Rome when they cum areound!" were the last words that floated after them as they rattled down the street on the road to Woodside.

* * * * *

Mary has caught sight of a waggon coming up the lane from the village. Why shouldn't she? She has been looking out of that window a hundred times every day. She had gone to the window once more and, then!

* * * * *

Who dares desecrate the sacredness of that meeting by an attempted description? Two hearts throbbing with love, two souls thrilled by the touch of an all-conquering affection. Leave them alone in their tears—tears of joy, sorrow, hope—a holy baptism!

Abijah was not at home. What business had he to be at home at such a time? Who wanted him to be at home? Who wanted chronic grumbling now? William was saved, and his Mary was in his arms. Then they wept together again. They knew well why they wept this time, though neither spoke. Each heart went out to the lonely grave in the wilderness somewhere, and dear Harry's name was whispered in the heart of One who pitieth His children.

The good-natured driver was considerably taken aback after having waited seated in his waggon what he thought a most unconscionable time, to see William at length come out of the house, occasionally pausing in his walk to imprint a kiss on the lips of the blushing girl by his side. But then he quickly remembered when he was young himself, and had been guilty of the same foolishness, no doubt; and all at once he saw the harness wanted adjusting, a strap having to be taken up a bit here, and another let out a bit there. He was busily engaged in this useful occupation when the young couple came up to the waggon. Then he was very much surprised to see them—of course—why not?

"Can't you leave your horse and waggon here?" asked William. "It's only a step over home, and I would sooner walk. Tie him here to the tree, and come on and get some dinner."

No, the driver would do just nothing of the kind. He had brought back "the first man from the wars," and he was going to carry him every step! Then they all got into the waggon and went rattling up the hill, the driver in a fearful state of alarm all the way, but more especially once in a while, as to the stability of his harness.

Had she told him? Yes, she had told him, but not all, and she shuddered as they passed the brook. He thought

her mind was going back to the long-ago, when she had fallen in there as a child, and he drew her closer to him while the driver, this time becoming nervous about the tire on one of his wheels, cast wild and scrutinizing glances in that direction. But Mary had been thinking of something else, something that froze the blood in her veins as she thought of it, praying as she thought, that William might never know it. He never did for years. But they have passed the brook and some one is at the door. Shall we blame the boy, if Mary is being helped out of the waggon by the stranger as William clasps his mother in his arms?

CHAPTER LVII.

CONSIDERATIONS AND PREPARATIONS.

THE driver bustled around the horse and waggon at a great rate; but at length satisfying himself as to the efficiency of the harness for the homeward journey, thought he might venture into the house. Some one had caught sight of the waggon coming along up the hill, and, thinking there might be news, followed on. Then Abijah's woe-begone face was seen at the door, and before an hour had elapsed the old kitchen was pretty well crowded by the neighbors. William, fortunately for himself, knew not with certainty who was missing from his company, and was thus spared the pain of wounding some loving heart. He had, however, seen many of the boys before leaving, and had many a fond message to

deliver. Then there was general rejoicing and the usual amount of weeping, till the somewhat dazed Jehu, who with great satisfaction looked upon himself as the cause of all this happiness, thought he must be going. Then they all thought they must be going. And they all went. All but the Olivers. There was no going for them. No one would hear of it. Abijah's proposition refused to be entertained. They had wept and rejoiced together again, and a peace from God came down upon each heart to which for weeks they had been strangers.

* * * * *

William had been at home for nearly a month before the thought that all along was uppermost in his mind found utterance in words. Mary had constantly baffled him. When he imagined that he had skilfully led up to the question, by some inexplicable stroke of girlish strategy he would suddenly find himself as far off as ever. He at last determined to precipitate matters, and for this purpose we find him one gloriously beautiful evening in August sitting under the beech tree, where they had so often in the old time played or recited their lessons together. Poor dear little Mary! The tears would come, do what she would, as she thought of the one who used then to be with them. William knew what it all meant, and he also knew that he would be unmanned again if he thought of the dead for a moment. He drew her closer and whispered:

"My Mary!"

She looked up at him through her moist eyelashes. He felt a choking in his throat as reminded by her look and action of the beloved Harry the last time he had seen him in the wood. He recalled to-day, as he never had done before, that if he had then acted differently

with the sweet-spirited lad he might still be alive. The thought pierced him. He was all but giving up again.

"My Mary! You remember your promise before we went away? We—we—were—to be—to be married—when I came back!"

He had said it, got through with it, he never knew how. But he had got through with it. And it is nobody's business what followed. It may be whispered, however, that poor old Abijah was not in the house or visible anywhere in the fields, nor was there any great lumbering driver feeling called upon to look after his harness by what was going on under the tree. But as William walked home in the dusk of the evening he walked on enchanted ground. He was so enswathed with the blissful dream of love that he was afraid to speak, lest it might vanish at the sound of his voice. He did speak, however, as he entered the house, and it didn't vanish either. It rather increased in its blessed intensity as he bashfully told his mother what was to come off a month from that day.

"God bless yew, me boy!"

And, as in duty bound, she wept—for she could weep now.

CHAPTER LVIII.

WHAT ALWAYS HAPPENS!

It would seem as if the month never would come to an end. So at least thought William. He was certain there never had been such length of days in all his life, not even when he was lying sick at heart, nigh unto death, a

prisoner in Louisburg. Mary thought just the very reverse of all this, and begged for an extension of time. The days, she protested, were just no days at all, and she could get nothing done as she wished it to be done. But long days or short days, or whatever sort of days they were, like all other days, they came to an end, and the long-expected morn dawned gloriously. Two of the truest hearts that ever beat in unison were united in holy bonds till death should them part. The mother had one long cry to herself when the young couple came home. Her thoughts were back to the day when, as a young bride, she had sat down here for the first time with her noble husband. Now she was alone. The light of her eyes had gone out in blackness. She wept long and hysterically. She felt that relief now in tears that before had been denied her. And she was the better for it. The sunshine burnt through the cloud. At eventide it was light. She wiped her eyes with the conviction that the cup of her sorrow would never for her be refilled. Henceforth there were to be no more tears except of joy. Nor were there. God was good. That she had proved. She knew He had heard her prayers. Always dissatisfied with the cast-iron creed in which she had been nurtured, the fearful fate of her beloved husband created a loathing against it which she carried to her grave. Profoundly convinced that he had been driven to madness and a suicide's death by erroneous conceptions of the divine government, her strong common sense as profoundly convinced her that God was good, and no capricious decrees could ever dry up the fountain of His goodness. She knew her two darling children entertained the same views, and henceforth the doctrines, decrees, and mysteries would be at a discount where once they had reigned supreme.

Poor old Abijah was there, too. Where else should he be? He even forgot for the time that the world and everything in it were in a vile conspiracy against himself as he glanced at the blushing face of his little Mary. He reconciled himself to her marriage with William on the ground that it was one of the "'pinted" things against which he had butted his head to no purpose for years. He had been the first among them to almost burst the shackles, but only to let them sink into his soul afresh. He kept on "athinkin' an' athinkin'," however, about the "deekrees," with occasional diversions into the realm of more mundane affairs. Whatever the latter were about, unlike the former they must have done him good, for it began to be whispered around the village that, a month or so after the marriage, he was actually seen to smile at something that was said to him in the store about his handsome son-in-law. Of this last, however, nothing definite can be written. He had never been known to do the like for years, so scepticism was pretty general in the matter of the smile.

Tenderly attached to each other, the young couple entered upon their married life with high hopes thrilling their hearts. If at times they wept together in Mary's old home during one of their daily visits to comfort her father, who positively refused to leave it, it always ended by drawing them closer and closer to each other and to God. For they believed in God! Not in an arbitrary tyrant who revelled in blood and gloated in tears, but in a God of love, who hears the cry of His trusting child. William had burst the shackles of the old theology many years ago, and he now rejoiced over his deliverance like a giant refreshed with new wine. He laid at the door of the inexorable creed, which bound his neighbors in fetters of iron, all that he had suffered himself and all that his

dear parents had suffered for him. He remembered with a pain in his heart the horrible blasphemy contained in Capt. Allen's letter. He knew that his beloved father's reason had been dethroned from dwelling on the logical consequences of his creed. From profound study of the Scriptures, coupled with a wonderfully keen and analytical mind, he revolted from the theory that a merciful God had capriciously elected a certain portion of mankind to eternal life, while He as capriciously passed by the remainder. "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man." This was the one article of the new creed which unaided he had evolved from the Bible, and upon which he dwelt long and earnestly, till even the beclouded father-in-law "'low'd it looked kind o' nateral, but he couldn't make it well eout."

The young wife could make it out though. She had found it a source of never-failing consolation to her, when alone in her grief she prayed, and felt that she was not praying against unalterable fate. And now husband and wife, remembering that God had promised never to cast away those who called upon Him, consoled themselves with these words. He had not turned away from them in the past, nor would He turn away from them in the future if they were faithful. His hand alone had brought them together. And they would dry their tears as they remembered that the same hand would yet bring them nigh unto the one whose mouldering body lay somewhere in a far-off grave. Then Abijah, as he heard them talk and saw their happy faces, would again "'low it looked a kind o' nateral;" but always had to add the qualifying clause, that he couldn't "jest make it eout."

But when the months rolled by, winter had come and gone, and summer was round once more with its perfumed breath, there came to William and Mary one day a little

stranger, who boisterously refused to be ignored and persistently demanded their attention. He got it, too. God bless the baby! They called him Harry, after the dead one; and the more than ever bewildered Abijah, "'lowin' he couldn't jest mak it eout," was set agoing again at his old "thinkin' an' athinkin'" by all these outrageous goings-on, and had nothing for it now but to be over at the "deekin's," as he still persisted in calling it, where he would hold the little rogue by the hour on his knee. And they said—indeed it was more than once whispered in the store—that he had been seen, when he thought no one was looking on, kissing the dimpled cheeks of the child over and over again while the big tears trickled down his face. God bless the baby!

THE END.

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